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ABSTRACT

The eight essays in this volume were written in response to a request for critical comments on early childhood policies and on particularly controversial subjects. The essays cover eight topics: (1) day care problems, including short- and long-term effects on children of different ages, policy questions, developmental issues, and evaluation criteria; (2) education and health care integration, focusing upon maternal and child health care, preschool education, and children with special needs; (3) women, children, and child care centers in the Netherlands, focusing upon parent relationships with child care centers and on government legislation regarding child care centers; (4) social policy and child development, specifically describing the concept of ecology in human development; (5) models of social management of children's services, with critical appraisal of integrated projects in France; (6) coordination of services to preschoolers, focusing upon both resource needs and on implementation of practices based upon theory; (7) parent education, presenting course offerings, methods for implementing courses, and research about course effects: (8) training professionals and parents, with descriptions of projects in several countries, use of media, in-service training styles, and some British parents' protests about parent education. (DB)

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CHILDREN AND SOCIETY

Issues for pre-school reforms

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PREFACE

It has now become almost an academic exercise to speculate on the life of our communities in the coming twenty years and the most significant changes likely to mark the end of this century and mould the way of life that will determine people's future needs. In this connection, it is generally agreed that the change of values that has been taking place in advanced industrial societies since the end of the post-war period will become clearer and more pronounced as time goes on. One of these new values is of especial interest to us, because it will have a far-reaching impact on child-and-family policies; this is the emancipation of women. It would, frankly, be simplistic to assume that the drive for emancipation merely reflects economic factors.

The changing role of women in working life expresses a deeper change which essentially concerns the personal identity of women in our advanced societies. It has to be admitted that the educational and social services inherited from the past are ill-adapted to the demands of women today. Thus it can easily be seen that one of the main tasks of future child-and-family policies will be to make it easier for women to assume their role not only as workers outside the home but also as mothers and educators. It follows that serious attention will have to be devoted in the coming years to investigating reforms in the organisation of public services for children and their parents and putting those reforms into practice.

Moreover, although changing values have been identified as one powerful driving force in the organisational reform process, other factors also have to be reckoned with. We will make no more than a brief reference to the changes in the organisation of labour which will mean, among other things, shorter working hours: in future, adults will have more time for leisure and family life. This likelihood should not lead us to conclude that parents or tutors will be better able to tackle all the problems of education and child care on their own, without any help from specialists or pre-school services. We may be sure, however, that existing facilities will have to be changed and reorganised to meet the needs of parents and their children.

After a long period during which public child-and-family services have been developed and enlarged (a stage which is as yet by no means over), we shall therefore now enter a phase of organisational reform of these services, where the emphasis will have to be on quality if mounting public demands for the education of children are to be met.

The volume introduced here contains a series of essays written for CERI's Early Childhood Project. Their authors were asked by the Secretariat to comment critically on early childhood policies and on certain particularly controversial subjects. Some of the essays were written in 1977, others are more recent; but all are of interest because together they help to throw light on the limits of policy reforms and provide valuable indicators for the identification and definition of problems and for the lines policy discussions should take. The innovative experiments described not only reveal new ways of varying the services offered but above all give detailed information on certain organisational aspects and thereby provide valuable methodological data on the reform process.

In introducing this book, the CERI Secretariat wishes to pay a particular tribute to the memory of Professor Jack Tizard, whose death in the summer of 1979 was cruelly felt. Jack Tizard had advised the Early Childhood Project throughout, and his open-minded approach, based on his rich personal experience and unusually wide scientific knowledge, were greatly appreciated.

We should like to dedicate this book to Jack Tizard, in the hope that the ideas and views it illustrates may help readers to take more effective action on behalf of children, especially the poorest and most deprived.

J. R. Gass,
Director,
Centre for Educational Research
and Innovation

INTRODUCTION

Preliminary note to an analysis of pre-school education(1)

Taken as a whole, the studies gathered together in the present volume cover a vast area of thought common to all people today who seek to put forward soundly based proposals for innovative policies concerning early childhood.

What are the possibilities, advantages, obstacles and limits of measures designed to co-ordinate or integrate the services dealing with children, which from the administrative standpoint correspond to different power centres, occupational categories, objectives and organisational procedures like the health, psychology or education services?

Under what conditions can self-management or "social management" of early childhood services operate, and what type of political, structural and cultural problems does this pose? In other words, how far is it possible nowadays to create relatively independent structures in the face of these complicated institutional apparatuses which perform the same function in all technologically advanced countries, regardless of the specific characteristics of each country, i.e. controlling the machinery of social life?

Taking into account the far-reaching changes to be observed within households, mainly due to the new role of women in contemporary society, what changes can be foreseen for the next few years in the production of education, care and welfare services for babies and young children up to the age of three?

What contribution do the mass media make (from the point of view of the quantity and quality of the information transmitted) to the dissemination of knowledge about early childhood amongst the adult population (and in particular, parents) and the improvement and updating of this knowledge? What influence is currently exerted on pedagogical methods by the general cultural climate and the types of information specific to each milieu that put their own stamp on children's education?

---

1) In the production of this volume, the CERI Secretariat had the benefit of the advice and assistance of Doctor Bruno Segre, Editorial Adviser, Milan, to whom thanks are expressed for his collaboration.

The different contributions which make up the present volume try to answer all these questions. They are ideally structured around Lüscher's paper which stresses the need for a general theoretical framework capable of organising the planning of policy measures for children so as to make good use of the children's social environment and avoid marginalisation of the interactions between the multiple variables making up this environment. The contributions preceding this text are, to some extent, all based on a common approach. In the light of past achievements, they seek to demonstrate that many improvements are still possible and necessary.

Thus, Tizard and Mantovani review all the issues which now have to be faced by all those concerned with the development of crèches and other types of day care and which must be seriously considered if it is desired to offer families types of care taking account of their educational expectations, children opportunities favouring their socialisation and staff sufficiently satisfactory working conditions to reduce the dangers of routine and motivate their interest.

Sandgren considers the vital role that the medical viewpoint has played in the implementation of measures in favour of children. In a few decades we have moved from a situation characterised by a medical monopoly to a more competitive situation brought about by the emergence and extraordinary success of psychology and the educational sciences. This has resulted in an increased need for co-ordination between different types of intervention, which cannot however be reduced to mere juxtaposition of different services, but implies the search for a new working methodology the unifying force of which can only derive from the development of a new conception of community life.

Lastly, Singer deals with the thorny problem of the driving force which the feminist movement has provided and continues to provide in the development of services tailored to the interests of families. Starting with a detailed analysis of the Netherlands' experience, she demonstrates the richness of grassroots movements and the voluntary initiatives of women's groups.

The contributions which follow Lüscher's paper are all dominated by the search for valid alternatives, based on criticism of the processes for identifying the real problems to be solved and detailed information about the nature of the instruments designed to solve them.

Thus, Mozère radically reverses the dominant management and technical perspective in which problems of co-ordination between different services and co-operation between specialists belonging to different scientific disciplines are usually perceived. Considering the results obtained in several local experiments, she demonstrates the fascinating possibility of creating a framework in which adults and children meet as it were spontaneously, living naturally as adult and child, without stifling their reciprocal needs. The basic prerequisite for this search for a natural environment involves decompartmentalising facilities, breaking down the closed nature of services and fighting against the rigid and limited logic of institutions.

Weiss, Rein and White continue this line of thought and, using arguments drawn from several American and European experiments, show how institutional logic opposes any plan for organisational reform of services in the interests of co-ordination. Despite the impressive unanimity that argument in favour of co-ordination generally arouses amongst all the authors concerned, when it comes to transforming this concept into concrete measures many contradictions and conflicts appear, significantly weakening the chances of success of reform programmes.

The last two contributions in this volume deal more specifically with the problems of parents' education and training of personnel.

Wolfson gives valuable information about one of the most innovative experiments recently carried out in a Member country in disseminating knowledge to the general public, i.e. the parental education programme developed by the Open University in England. Her detailed description of the programme gives the reader a very concrete idea of all the questions which must be taken into consideration when planning the preparation of a course of this kind and hence the scale of development programmes in this field.

Lastly, Corbett deals with the other main actors: educators and staff. In the light of the observations appearing mainly in the studies by Tizard, Mantovani, Sandgren and Mozère, there is no doubt of the urgent need to modify the traditional training models for staff dealing with children. It is necessary to leave the beaten path if it is desired to improve the quality of provision and develop new children's services in order to satisfy the multiple needs of families and children in the best possible way. A new path must be sought and the experiment described by Corbett gives some idea of the direction it should take.

All these different contributions which present a synthesis of important analytical studies are distinguished at first glance by the wealth and diversity of data and appraisals of the orientation, implementation and results of the numerous experimental measures launched in one country or another. All these initiatives contain potential pointers to interesting new lines of development for early childhood policies.

The main value of these studies, however, lies in the diversity of orientations revealed by the authors.

The various writers had to give a general opinion on the real possibilities of applying the innovations envisaged in the field of early childhood policies and this was the main difficulty they had to overcome. The reader will very soon notice that their judgements reflect a very broad spectrum of different shades of opinion from the frankly optimistic to the more cautious, implying a whole series of critical objections.

It might be tempting to attribute this diversity of opinion solely to the diversity of cultural environments specific to the participants' countries of origin. To do so, however, would no doubt restrict the horizon and it would be impossible to get a balanced view of the different arguments put forward in this work. In fact, implementing development plans for services for early childhood is an extremely sensitive issue touching on the relationships between family life and institutional requirements, between the spheres of private and public life, and thus necessitating complicated ethical and political choices to which no preconceived cultural ideas could do justice.

Clearly it would not be appropriate to defer the urgent need for a deeper approach of this type for politicians, practitioners and more generally all citizens concerned with the problems of childhood.

The extraordinary multiplication of public and private initiatives in favour of children throughout the past decade has completely transformed the nature of the debate about the qualitative and quantitative development of these services and the attitude of the authorities towards facilities for children. Henceforth, it is no longer a question of meeting the needs of the poorest and most disadvantaged families through measures of the assistance type. On the contrary, all social classes are now concerned with the quality and extension of facilities which can provide a better response to the numerous problems of child-minding, education and care familiar to all families. Consequently, this general interest in children's services requires an appropriate change in the organisation and operation of such services. It is no longer possible to go on managing institutions which should be available to all as if they were only intended for a small number. There is a qualitative advance to be made, parallel to the quantitative one, and the concepts of democratisation, social management and participation represent efforts to achieve it.

There are no simple overall solutions to the problem of families. The large-scale, disordered migration of recent years and the resulting uncontrolled growth of towns, now the prevailing centres of human settlement; the bureaucratisation of administrative life in the interests of rationalisation (real or imagined) of the management

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of services; the centralisation of decision-making; the complexity of households; the diversity of living conditions; the plurality of values and beliefs - all these call for the development of programmes which must necessarily be multi-faceted, differentiated and phased over time.

In other words, all those concerned in developing a policy for children and the family which corresponds to the real interests of the population must be careful to avoid introducing centrally-planned normative measures which aggravate the conformism, dependence and uniformity already widespread among our communities. It is known that parents do not want to be dispossessed either of their offspring or their responsibilities. On the contrary, what they want above all is respect of their autonomy, protection of their home, the creative fulfilment, greater ability to master their environment.

The orientations to be adopted in the future and the policy choices to be made for the development of pre-school education are important issues in community life in which none of those concerned and interested should be content to play a passive role or be reduced to the status of a mere spectator.

I

DAY CARE PROBLEMS*

by

Jack Tizard, Susanna Mantovani

A. INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive report: Child Care Programs in Nine Countries was prepared for the OECD Working Party on the Role of Women in the Economy by Kamerman and Kahn(1975). In their "overview" of pre-school services the authors write as follows:

> "Preschool coverage (part-day and/or full-day) is already very extensive in most countries studied. Projected plans stress universal coverage, on a voluntary basis, for all children between the ages of three (approximate) and compulsory school age(1). At present the demand for preschool programs far exceeds that for programs for children under age 3, and the highest rate of usage of existing preschool programs is by middle-class children(2).

---

* This paper is based on documents by S. Kamerman and A. Kahn for the OECD Working Party on the Role of Women in the Economy, and on papers prepared by Professor Jack Tizard of the Thomas Coram Research Unit, London and Dr. Susanna Mantovani at the University of Parma for the OECD/CERI project on Early Childhood Education. The synthesis of the different contributions has been established by Myriam Harris, London.

1) For the nine countries studied this was:
   - a) age 5 - Israel, United Kingdom;
   - b) age 6 - Canada, France, Federal Republic of Germany, United States (United States states set the compulsory age as 6 or 7 but, in practice, practially all children attend by age 6. Where we refer to the United States, we employ age 6);
   - c) age 7 - Poland, Sweden, Yugoslavia.

2) The following terms are used interchangeably:
   - a) day care, crèche, nursery, day nursery;
   - b) kindergarten, preschool, nursery school, école maternelle.

Despite the expansion of formal, organised child-care arrangements (center and family) there continues to exist, in most of the countries covered, a considerable amount of unregulated, unlicensed, informally arranged, and usually uncounted family day care.

Where formal resources are in short supply - and this therefore means most programs in most countries, the single, major criterion for eligibility for such programs is: presumptive social need. Although the hierarchy of preference varies among countries, priority is given to the following categories of children:

a) children of working mothers or full-time students;
b) children of one-parent families;
c) children of immigrant families;
d) children of socially, economically, and/or culturally deprived or disadvantaged families;
e) abused or neglected children.

Within all the preceding categories, priority is given to children from low-income families.

Most programs are universal and nonmeans tested, although they may employ income criteria as the basis for sliding-fee schedules. Other than the publicly provided preschool educational programs in some countries, almost all programs involve some fee payment by parents.

The predominant goals in child-care programs are:

a) for programs serving children under age 3: custodial - the care and protection of young children(1);
b) for programs serving children aged 3 and over; educational (and to a lesser extent social).

Structure: Day care and preschool are either two consecutive age-related systems (0-3; 3-6), for the most part under separate ministries (welfare or health, and education), or two parallel systems with preschool beginning in the middle of the age cohort covered by day care (e.g. day care 0-6; kindergarten 3-6). Regardless, the general tendency is for there to be no co-ordination between the systems with consequent problems for children and families as well as for care providers. There is frequent contact between health services and child-care services, regardless of whether the child-care programs are in the health system or not, and the need for greater integration of health and child-care services is noted and acknowledged in all countries.

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1) Note the use of this tern as meaning "good quality care", not the pejorative use made by many in the United States to mean "only physical care and nothing else."

Financing: Most child-care programs are publicly funded, either directly or by purchase of service through voluntary agencies. In three of the four countries characterized by extensive voluntary-agency provision of care, there is also considerable provision under proprietary auspices.

The extent of public subsidy for child-care programs is very high in all countries, and there is no relationship between economic costs and even the maximum fee charged. Where fees are charged (in some preschool programs; in most day-care programs) fees range from low to lower. It is also worth noting that in those countries where proprietary care is prevalent, fees for such care are not much higher than the fees of non profit programs (and sometimes are lower). There are no hard data comparing quality of care, however, and no consistency regarding the basis for - or composition of - start-up or construction costs. However, a uniform characteristic of the operating costs of child-care programs in all countries is that 70-80 per cent of the costs is attributed to expenditures for staff.

Apart from this it is difficult to compare costs of programs in different countries, yet, one other generalisation regarding costs seems valid: the costs of family day care are never analyzed precisely and tend to be underestimated. (They often do not include rent, depreciation of facility and equipment, and replacement costs and assume very low wages for the family-day-care mother).

Inequities in geographic distribution: No country has yet coped adequately with providing organized child-care programs in rural areas. Nor are there systematic approaches to differentiating need in urban and rural areas.

Staffing: There is inconsistency between countries and no consensus regarding the nature of training, qualifications for child-care staff, and ratio of staff to children in care.

Unmet need for care: Apart from preschool programs for children aged 3 and over, the major pressure for increased coverage, specifically identified in several countries, is supplementary child-care programs for school-aged children up to age 14: that is, before-and-after-school-hours programs, covering short and long school vacations for the children of working mothers."

This succinct extract provides a context for the issues considered below.

In some countries parents themselves have organised group care, in the absence of public services. The play group movement, largely organised by mothers who take turns to staff the group, is a prominent feature of Early Child Care and Education (ECCE) in a number of countries - in England, for example, one third of 3- and 4-year-olds attend play groups, which make by far the greatest contribution to provision. Increasingly, training courses are being organised for play group leaders, and these voluntary groups are receiving public subventions to help meet costs. However, almost all play groups are for children from the age of three, and most provide only half-day care.

For children under the age of three, as has been mentioned, very little is provided. Nevertheless, all countries have been obliged to provide some nursery facilities, either in day nurseries (crèches) or in family day-care settings (child minding). In general "family" day-care is less well organised and supervised, and is usually arranged privately between the parent and the child minder. The unsatisfactory and unstable nature of these arrangements is giving rise to schemes for public supervision and control.

In addition to these day-care arrangements, industrial countries have introduced programmes of health surveillance, and free (or readily available) medical treatment for children. In some countries (e.g. France, Finland, Sweden) routine surveillance is pretty well universal. In most, however, the service is by no means adequate, and especially after the first year of life children are only taken to the doctor for acute illnesses.

B. ISSUES

Questions concerning current policy and what is planned for the future raise issues over the effects of ECCE on children, and issues of political philosophy concerning the relative duties of individuals and the state in respect of child care. The political debate is as old as history and is not likely to be settled here. The psychological issues are, however, ones which are, ostensibly at least, resolvable empirically.

1. Short-term effects of ECCE on children of different ages

Controversy over whether children suffer from going into day care which involves separation from the mother for part of the day centres largely round under-threes. The evidence seems to warrant the following conclusions.

For the youngest infants (0-6 months) the caretaker is of less significance than the quality of care and the material setting in which it is offered. Clearly, however, these very young children are learning rapidly. They are coming to an age when they can register their perception of differences between people; they are learning to associate sights and sounds with actions; they have an inborn need for human contacts; they require consistency in their management and variety of experience. Good day care which provides these is expensive of manpower and facilities. However, for children living in very poor material circumstances or who are given very inadequate physical and social care, day care outside the home is likely to be beneficial, even life saving. For other very young children , too, day care of high quality can be satisfactory - and satisfying - and the issue of whether it should be given them may be one which considers the needs of parents and families rather than simply the children.

There has been little systematic study of the effects of day care on children from 6 months to 2½ or 3 years. Such evidence as we have does not suggest adverse effects if the day care is of good quality. However, there has been little study of curriculum, or patterns of day care, or of the children who enter it. Unwarranted generalisations have instead been drawn from the classical studies of residential care - which poses different problems. Since many parents who have the welfare of their children very much at heart would make use of day care if they could, the onus is on those who think they would be wrong to do so to support such views with evidence. This they have so far failed to do.

Upon somewhat older children attending nursery schools (kindergarten) the effects have not been marked, unless special programmes are instituted which aim to teach the children specific skills. There is no evidence that children in day care suffer distortion in personality growth.

For children of school age, facilities for care during holidays and out of school hours are largely lacking. The great need for them remains unfulfilled and largely unexpressed - as does the need for comparable services for younger children of working mothers.

In short, for children of all ages the effects of day care depend upon its duration, its quality, the quality of the home, and the child's biological make-up and experience. We know a great deal about how to provide good day care - if by that is meant care that the children enjoy and the parents feel happy about. That they benefit from this can hardly be disputed. Whether day care which is differently organised could benefit children more is largely a matter of opinion which is summarised below.

2. Long-term effects: can ECCE give children a "head start"?

The providers of traditional nursery education have argued that early education has long-lasting effects, but recent evaluative studies throw doubt on this. It is, however, clear that the most disadvantaged children benefit from "substitute" care which provides adequate nurture during early childhood, and that they will acquire skills which they might not otherwise gain during these years (e.g.

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physical skills, language competency, social skills). It is also possible, even likely, that the spread of good child care and education will bring about a secular change in age-related standards of development which current evaluation measures may fail to pick up; e.g. over the last half century there has been an increase in the stature of children which amounts to 10 cm. by the age of 6 years and which remains at that level at least until puberty - would this striking increase have been so obvious without an absolute scale on which to measure height? There is comparable evidence about secular changes in I.Q. (Tizard, 1979). But it is not the case that ordinary nursery education has been shown to have any long-lasting effects, for good or ill, on later development.

There is, however, some evidence to suggest that ECCE could, if organised on different lines, make an enduring contribution to children's development. The ideas, and their testing in practice, require research. This should have high priority since the implications both for children and for the amount and type of provision we should aim to have are profound:

a) American investigators have pointed out that "incidental" learning of the sort fostered in nursery schools is an inefficient way of acquiring any specific skill. Yet in nursery education outside China there is very little formal teaching - e.g. children are not now taught to engage in group activities such as dance, or to draw, or read music; nor are they encouraged to persist in activities. Nursery programmes designed to teach specific skills have been shown to be moderately successful, and there is an obvious need for much more research in this area. The remarkable examples of successful programmes to teach specific skills shown by the Suzuki method of teaching the violin to children from a very young age and by Chinese children's precocity in gymnastics and dance as well as the Head Start experimental programmes designed to increase educational and cognitive skills seriously challenge the belief, which derives from Rousseau and Froebel, that children learn best through play.

b) There is some evidence to support the view that social class differences, which are marked by the time children enter school and which persist strongly throughout the whole period of compulsory education, have their origin and are established by the age of 2½ or 3 years. Particularly striking is evidence from Israel which shows that "oriental" Jews (from North Africa) are, as compared with Jews of European origin, precocious in early infancy, of equivalent developmental level at age two, but increasingly backward at ages 3 and 4 years. Smilansky (1976) who has carried out a longitudinal study of a large and typical sample and who reports these findings, argues with some cogency that they are to be explained in terms of the different child rearing patterns of the two culturally different groups. Supportive evidence for this thesis comes from studies of children adopted from residential nurseries at different ages and from the spectacular success of the Milwaukee Project. In this, children born to black, disadvantaged women of low IQ were given a stimulating and varied day care programme from about the age of three months. Whereas IQs of a matched control group fell during the second year of life and remained more or less constant thereafter, the IQs of the experimental group rose during the second year of life and remained fairly constant thereafter (the gap between the two groups remaining at about 25 IQ points from the age of 2 through 6 years). If it can be established that an educational regimen which begins before the third year of life is of crucial importance for later cognitive development, both the amount and the type of ECCE will have to be reconsidered.

c) There is a strongly expressed but not altogether convincing view that ECCE programmes have no lasting effects unless the parents are personally involved in them and change their teaching strategies accordingly. An alternative explanation for differential effects could be that successful programmes involve adult participation in, as opposed to supervision over, the activities of the children; it is striking how little adults in charge of children in nurseries actually join in their activities, yet as every parent knows, young children have an intense desire to model the behaviour of adults, and the best way to teach a child is to have him share in activities that an adult is doing.

These considerations point to the need for high staff ratios, continuity of staffing and explicit teaching of desired skills, preferably by parents or at least with parental involvement. They raise the question which any provision of a service must face as to its formal objectives. ECCE services have been vague about these, and clearer definitions of objectives which meet the needs of children and of parents are required.

3. Parental involvement

Whether or not parental participation is necessary, if ECCE programmes are to be successful, it is certainly desirable, because very many parents want this ("communal democracy" in Sweden, "gestione sociale" of the school in Italy, and the enormous and totally unpredicted success of the Pre-school Play Group Movement in a number of countries). How to facilitate it and what the implications are for curriculum, remains to be explored, but some points can be made now:

a) Many parents are unconvinced by the Froebelian objectives of the nursery schools and by the means used to further them; they would respond more readily to programmes which stipulated specific objectives (not necessarily comprehensive) and which laid out the steps by which these were to be attained.

b) The role of the teacher, and the training of teachers to pursue this role, require further examination. For if there is to be much more participation by volunteers, parents and para-professionals in the nursery services, new relations between professionals and other adults must be fostered. The role of the fully trained professional will then be, to a much greater extent than in the past, one of working with adults rather than children; professional training must equip them for this.

c) Parental involvement raises the crucial problem of control over organisation and curriculum. Parent control is resisted by professionals: but active parent involvement is unlikely to occur unless parents have much more direct control over these matters.

d) Swedish experience and policy is designed to attract more men into what is at present an almost exclusively female world of ECCE. If this trend continues it is likely to affect curriculum and organisation.

e) Parental involvement need not stop when the child begins primary school. The Norwegian request to consider the co-ordination of social and educational services for children from birth to nine years deserves study.

f) In Sweden in particular, but to a lesser extent in other countries, discussion is beginning to turn to the implications for services affecting young children, of changes in work patterns by both men and women. These have come about because of changes in the nature of work, the fall in fertility and new conceptions of women's roles and of parenting and parental roles. If the movement to increase the amount of time that either parent can take off work to care for young children grows - as it probably will - and if both men and women can be induced to take up these options, the demands for parental participation in ECCE will change in character.

4. Ideological objections - and selective services

The contemporary formulation of what was discussed during the XIXth century in terms of laissez-faire and the rights and duties of families to look after their own members, is cast now in cost-benefit terms. A related issue is whether the public authority can adequately discharge its obligations to children by providing selective services to disadvantaged or priority groups, leaving other families to make their own arrangements. Until the 1950s or 1960s this was by and large the view taken about ECCE in OECD countries. Now it is coming to be recognised that the problems of making equitable decisions about priority categories of children are insuperable, and that selectively offered services, though they benefit their recipients, create a state of relative deprivation among those who are denied them. Thus services which are planned to serve the needs of a section of the population defined as disadvantaged by one set of criteria, may not provide for others who, using different criteria, would indubitably be regarded as disadvantaged - and different definitions of the term give rise to very differing estimates of the proportion of families whose children are disadvantaged enough to warrant priority in nursery placement.

In England, for example, the Department of Health and Social Security recommends as a target for 1983 that local authorities provide 8 full-day nursery places per thousand children aged 0-4 years (that is, about 33,000 places). But in Britain in 1971 there were nearly 600,000 mothers of young children in employment, 176,000 of them working over 30 hours per week. These mothers who worked full-time had over 200,000 children. The "priority categories" for nursery care proposed by DHSS do not even include children of mothers in employment; working mothers with husbands must make private arrangements - yet many of their children must need, but do not receive, good nursery care. What the Department does instead is to single out for top priority placement the children of the mentally ill, the socially incompetent, the deserted and unmarried mothers, and children who live in grossly overcrowded conditions, those who are handicapped and those who are neglected. But even taking the Department's own categories, their estimate of the number of places falls very far short of any epidemiological estimate of numbers. Mothers who are psychiatrically depressed or anxious, for example, may be as many as one-quarter of all mothers of young children. And what of children of single parent families - 260,000 aged 0-4 years in Britain in 1971, 20,000 being motherless? Or children in large families? In grossly overcrowded households? In low-income families? In households where the language in the home is not English? Or handicapped children? Or children who have nowhere to play?

These groups overlap to some extent. But they are not the same groups, and the larger do not necessarily include all, or even a majority, of the children who fall into other disadvantaged categories: a service designed primarily for priority groups is bound to exclude many borderline children, as well as others at least as disadvantaged by any other criteria; and in these circumstances, staff have a hard time of it, and the children themselves are denied the opportunities to learn from other children; and standards are likely to slip because the services do not come under close and informed parental scrutiny.

The objections to services the use of which is confined to children growing up in households which have certain administratively defined adverse features apply with equal force to priority areas (Barnes and Lucas, 1975). Some geographical areas (the current favourite is the "inner city") contain very high proportions of disadvantaged children - using any criteria to which this term could conceivably apply. But most disadvantaged children do not live in these ghettos; they are spread widely. Hence area-based programmes concentrating on the most disadvantaged geographical localities will help only a small proportion of needy children.

These arguments reinforce the case against selective services on the grounds that they are bound to be inadequate. They suggest that, instead, we should be moving towards services which are freely available. Whether or not children attend these, and (within reason) for how long each day, should, according to this view, be determined by the parents and not the experts: though the experts can of course advise and help parents in their decisions.

5. Costs

Economic issues are not discussed here. However, they have social and political implications. Among them are the following:

a) No cost-benefit analyses of ECCE have been undertaken. On the cost side should be offset against economic costs of a service the increase in GNP brought about by the net increase attributable to the labour of parents "released" for economic activity. Likewise if employees in a nursery service would otherwise be unemployed, only the additional wage costs are relevant.

b) Estimates of the savings to the health and social welfare expenditure due to improvements in health and well-being of parents should be deducted. (A prior research task is to find ways of measuring them).

c) Benefits due to any improvement in the development of children (or parents at the time or later) should be appropriately costed in economic terms.

d) Cost analyses should be spread over the life cycle. That is, current costs should be regarded as "advances" paid at one period of life and repaid later in the form of taxes. This would put them on a par with other educational costs or for example mortgage payments. Cost analyses made only on an annual basis - so much a head - perpetuate XIXth century arguments about subsidising economically inactive members.

None of these costs and benefits are possible to estimate at all accurately today - which does not mean they are unimportant. A major research task is to find ways of specifying the costs and benefits of alternative programmes of ECCE.

6. Full-time or part-time?

For how many hours per day, and how many days per week a nursery service should be provided (whether or not it is offered selectively or is universally available) is much debated. There can be no general answer. But it seems unlikely that any country will be willing, even if it were able, to provide "24-hour" nursery care on demand. If parents cannot care for their children outside normal (staff) working hours, there are probably better ways of enabling them to do so than providing ECCE for their young children - for instance by making changes in the working hours of parents, or other social measures to improve their conditions of life.

A feature of the data on expressed parental desire is the relatively small desire for services of less than three hours a day. Half-day services (3-4 hours) are somewhat more popular - but for the total age range more parents (about one-quarter) desire full-day services; and for three- and four-year-old children full school day services are wanted as often as half-day services. In Britain as in many other countries public policy favours half-day services for these age groups. A consequence is that there are empty places in some nursery schools because the hours do not suit parents. The two greatest but unmet needs appear to be for full-day care for perhaps one-quarter of all children after their first birthday and for one-sixth of all infants, and for the equivalent of a full school day ECCE for children over the age of one.

Demand will of course vary with area, with parental conditions of life and expectations - and with the supply of services, since additional supply is likely to stimulate additional demand. The quality and accessibility of the service are also factors as are demands for labour, cost of living and wages, family size and the other factors mentioned in the Introduction.

Sometimes the desire for full-day services arises solely as a consequence of long hours of parental employment. This is brought out by data obtained from the Thomas Coram Research Unit survey in London, as well as in French and Swedish studies. Mothers in professional occupations and those in unskilled jobs are more likely than other women with young children to be working more than 30 hours a week soon after the birth of a baby (doctors are especially likely to return to work when the baby is still very young); however, when asked if they would continue to work at all, or if they would reduce their hours, if there was more money coming into the house, professional parents are less likely to want to alter their way of life, and unskilled mothers more likely. Clearly it is undesirable that young mothers should be obliged to be employed for long hours in order not to have to live in poverty: however, if they desire to work for other reasons some provision has to be made either by themselves or by society for the proper care of their children. Early child care and education cannot be divorced from other aspects of family policy, and only a flexible and adaptable system which combines full-day care and part-time care is likely to be satisfactory to parents.

The desire of increasing numbers of mothers of young children to return to work is in part, but only in part, due to a desire to earn money. Surveys suggest that professional and social factors - desire for company, for independence, for a more varied way of life - are equally important. The issues raised are part of a wider set of issues concerned with family, employment and the allocation of time, both by men and women. A discussion of these, including measures to introduce more flexible time schedules and part-time work, and others to facilitate return to work after child bearing, and training programmes to enable women to break out of a narrow range of unskilled jobs or low paid "feminised" occupations, has been published by Lecoultre (1976) in a paper which formed part of the proceedings of a conference with the whole question of mothers in employment. The conference report, edited by Fonda and Moss, provides a useful review of the problems.

Working mothers are an important and growing section of the labour force, and their children form an increasing proportion of the pre-school population. On policy grounds, however, it is probably a mistake to plan separate services for them. The needs should, rather, be examined in the broader context of services for all families.

7. Age range

Should there be one service for children under three, another for children from three to four or five, and another starting at compulsory school age; or should there be a pre-school service from birth to five or six; or a service from 0-2 and one from 3-8; or a single service from 0-8 or 0-12?

The question remains unanswered. In favour of a split at two or three are the arguments that the young children can get greater protection, more specialised attention as babies, and more individual care, from expert staff in a highly staffed, well equipped, and hygienic nursery. Against, is the danger that in a largely prelinguistic child environment, language development may be retarded, there will be few older children for the younger ones to copy, and too many very young ones all requiring attention at much the same time. A further disadvantage is that children will be required to make a break at an impressionable and vulnerable age. The same arguments apply, though with less force, to the older age groups. For these reasons developmental psychologists would probably favour small centres, adequately staffed, but catering for a wide age range of children. From the parents' point of view such arrangements have the advantage that children of different ages do not have to be taken to different centres. Likewise second children will have an older sib at the centre. A centre with a wide age range can also draw from a smaller catchment area and be more flexible in its intake policy - e.g. can increase the number of places for children of one age group rather than another, should demand change. Possibly, therefore, it is the best answer. There is however no one right pattern: much more important than questions of centre size or age range are questions of organisation, size of primary group, continuity and calibre of staffing and curriculum.

8. Scope of services

An unfortunate tendency in most day-care centres is to plan services which reflect the concerns of the department responsible for administering them rather than services that are designed to meet the needs of the clients. Thus educational services pay too little regard to social issues, and those organised by social welfare departments are not educationally oriented. Neither pays adequate attention to the health needs of children. Similarly, services organised by a health authority, which are usually staffed by nurses, tend to have an excessive concern with hygiene and far too little regard for the children's psychological and social needs.

a) The importance of health services in ECCE

As already mentioned, most countries recognise that it is necessary to provide health coverage for all young children. In some, e.g. France, Finland and Sweden, the take-up of preventive and surveillance child health services is almost universal, while in others, e.g. Britain, the administrative framework is there but the services are not fully utilised. Where this occurs, incidentally, the parents are usually blamed for their negligence: a more constructive reaction would be to start from the premise that a failure to use a service indicates that there is something wrong with the service - it has not been tailored to fit the needs of the client. In the case of unused infant welfare services the reasons are fairly clear. Parents do not take their children to the preventive and assessment clinics because they see no reason to do so, and because the service they receive is so often hurried and unhelpful; moreover it is not able to offer treatment. A good service which does not have these shortcomings will be utilised by almost everyone (Bax, 1976).

A service which maintains surveillance over the total population of young children must be built around the work of the public health nurse (health visitor). To do her work effectively, she must be responsible for the oversight of all children in a geographically defined area. She will work most effectively if she undertakes some home nursing and treatment as well as assessment and the giving of advice.

Public health nurses require paediatric (medical) support. However, many of the problems they will meet will require social rather than medical measures. Unless "disadvantaged" children can be offered ECCE there is often little that can be done to help them.

b) The educational and welfare components

Services organised both by the health authority and by the welfare authority usually pay little regard to the young child's educational needs. Either these are unrecognised or discounted or, more commonly today, they are believed to be the special concern of qualified professionals called teachers. Educational establishments for their part concentrate on what they see as their proper function, but regard the child's welfare - e.g. his care in out-of-school hours - as someone else's responsibility.

The distinction between "care" and "education" is formally recognised in France and is maintained through less formal arrangements in most other OECD countries. For children of all ages this leads to serious problems; and for young children the distinctions are psychologically meaningless. They lead also to most serious administrative problems in that two grades of staff, with very different patterns of recruitment and training, salary scales, conditions of service and career opportunities, are supposed to work together doing jobs that are often scarcely distinguishable. (In all countries teachers get far more pay, work far shorter hours and have far longer holidays than child care staff). The distinction can only be explained historically; in ECCE it has little functional justification and leads to considerable friction in centres which combine "day care" and "education". The problems that result require to be confronted and may prove to be insoluble in services organised on the lines followed in most countries today. Only in a truly integrated service will it be possible to overcome the problems of staff hierarchies, and avoid boundary disputes as to what duties can legitimately be carried out by staff of different grades. Only in an integrated service will it be possible to overcome the barriers which professionalism erects against the promotion of those who are not qualified (by the possession of a diploma or certificate which admits them to membership of a guild whose primary purpose is to maintain its members' position and maintain pay differentials).

If this is true it follows that a restructuring of the profession of early childhood education is a necessary condition for adequate ECCE.

c) Parents and professionals

Professionalism, with its associated hierarchies legitimised by qualifications rather than by competence or performance, does not provide a good organisational framework for adequate ECCE. A further disadvantage of a service run by professionals is that it finds little place for parents, volunteers or non-professionals. Yet on manpower grounds alone a purely professional service will not be able to provide for more than a fraction of the children who would benefit from it; and by leaving out parents such a service is likely on the one hand to weaken rather than strengthen their confidence and ability to act as good parents, and on the other hand to enhance rather than alleviate mothers' feelings of depression, anxiety and low self-esteem. An integrated service, as the term is used here, would necessarily find ways of involving non-professionals as equal partners in ECCE. It would also find ways of paying such people, where this was appropriate, and provide ways by which they might move from one position in the service to another without necessarily acquiring formal qualifications in a college or institute of higher learning. How to devise and maintain such a service is the central problem affecting the organisation of ECCE.

C. POLICY QUESTIONS ARISING FROM THESE ISSUES

Kamerman (1976) comments that "in almost every country other than the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada, there is no functional distinction made between day care and preschool for children over the age of three years. For these children as for the children of compulsory school age, the 'care' function is subsumed under the functions of education and socialisation; there is only one major program model, a form of preschool.

In several Member countries, coverage in such programs is already very high: over 90 per cent in Belgium and France, over

60 per cent in the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy, over 50 per cent in Sweden and in the United States(1). Except for the United States, all these countries project still higher coverage over the next few years. In most others, current plans stress coverage of this age group as soon as resources permit. At present, where places are scarce, priority is usually given to those children identified as having the greatest need (children of working mothers, full-time students, single parents, or children from economically, socially, emotionally, culturally deprived families)."

This analysis suggests that the growing demand for services will within the next few years oblige governments to provide or take responsibility for a nursery service which will be available for all children from the age of three years whose parents choose to avail themselves of it.

The same considerations apply to the under-threes; in France and Belgium 23 per cent of two-year-olds are in écoles maternelles and in England and Wales 19 per cent of two-year-olds receive some sort of day care. Indeed the proportions of children under five whose parents desire, and who receive, day care in England and Wales reveal trends which evidence suggests are common throughout the industrial world. The data suggest that we need to plan for ECCE services for about one-fifth of infants under 1; two-fifths of children aged between 1 and 2 years; 70 per cent of two-year-olds; and at least 90 per cent of children from the age of three.

In short the political pressures for ECCE to be universally available for children whose parents desire this are likely to be comparable in their effects to the pressures which have brought about changes in other social legislation and provision: for higher education for example, for divorce, for family allowances, for abortion, for pensions.

From what has been said a number of questions arise:

1. Current social policy

There is a need to get better information and regular reviews concerning:

a) economic activity rates (proportion of mothers of young children working) by type of job, hours of work, number of children;
b) policy towards women's (mothers') employment: equal pay; maternity leave; child allowances; employers' liability,

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1) We note comparable trends elsewhere, e.g. over 90 per cent in Israel; in Eastern Europe: over 85 per cent in the USSR and the German Democratic Republic, 75 per cent in Hungary, 65 per cent in Czechoslovakia, 50 per cent in Poland - all in pre-school programmes.

e.g. to give time off (with pay?) when child is sick;

c) whether mother's wage or parent wage paid or proposed;
d) other measures to encourage or discourage mothers to work;
e) any special policies towards disadvantage - how defined? How many benefit from these measures?;
f) demographic analyses - using the same definitions in each country (birth rates, population trends, population movements);
g) policies towards services (health, education, day care) for young children to ensure coverage available and/or adequate;
h) other measures to promote family policies.

To enable international comparisons to be made there must be consistency in the manner in which such data are collected and reported. This would involve agreement among Member countries about data collection, and the drawing up of very specific questions to be put to Member countries.

2. Amount and form of ECCE

Since data are sparse and not comparable there is a need for surveys to provide:

a) rates of provision by type (defined), age, hours;
b) estimates of the amount of illegal or unregistered provision;
c) actual use made of, e.g., health services and of different types of day-care service by social characteristics of families;
d) staffing ratios, payment, training of staff, turnover, economic costs, size of establishment, in different forms of provision: in urban and rural areas of different social composition;
e) more detailed cost-benefit studies which would explore both in a more sophisticated way. Because of the variety of practice in different OECD countries comparative studies could prove especially valuable to countries planning expansion of services.

3. Unmet needs and what parents want

Surveys are required:

a) to inquire into extent of the unmet needs, parental desires, satisfactions with existing services;
b) to enable forecasts to be made of future needs or desire for services (considering manpower forecasts too) by social class, type of locality (urban/rural; inner city/suburban, etc.);

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c) to determine the extent to which children are moved from one place of day care to another;

d) to explore the implications of different forms of control (e.g. gestione sociale).

4. Future policy

The conclusions reached by Kamerman and Kahn, quoted earlier, are identical with those arrived at by researchers in the Thomas Coram Research Unit on the basis of analyses of current economic and demographic trends in industrial countries. They are that the desire on the part of parents for universal (i.e., freely available but not compulsory) services for young children for care-and-education (ECCE) outside the home, for all or part of the day, has now become part of the political agenda. There is still a question about the extent to which provision will be made for children under three (or perhaps two). But for the over-threes the decision as to services of some kind seems to have already been taken, whether explicitly (as in France and Belgium, for example) or de facto as in many other countries.

a) Do governments accept the logic of this argument? If so, over what time span is the provision of services envisaged? It is significant in this context that the current economic recession has in many countries not led to a fall in the proportion of women with young children who are gainfully employed outside the home.

b) If services are made available for young children during "school hours" (i.e., the hours for which schooling is provided for children of compulsory school age) what arrangements are envisaged for their care before and after school, and during school holidays? How can these be adjusted to fit in with the needs of older children? Should there, in other words, be a common policy towards the care of children, at least up to adolescence?

c) What about children under the age of three years? What expectations are made concerning parental "demand" for services, and what response are governments planning to make if demand increases?

d) What evidence is there that alternative measures of social policy will influence demand? France, which has generous family allowances, also has high rates of employment among mothers of young children, and, despite comparatively generous provision, a large unsatisfied demand for more.

e) The costs, as well as benefits, of ECCE have scarcely been looked at except by accountants and borough treasurers. Cost-benefit analyses are urgently needed.

f) Whether or not governments plan explicitly to provide "universal" services, they still require to plan for a great expansion, both for the under-threes and for "pre-schoolers". The form which this provision should take is thus of prime importance, and a later section of this report considers the issues raised.

D. DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES ARISING

From the literature available on day care, one characteristic emerges which is apparently shared by most child care outside the family: the origin of the crèche has generally been provision intended principally to help the family and especially the working mother, and not as an educational opportunity for the child. The provision for working mothers sometimes produced interesting experiments such as factory-crèches. In periods of economic growth there was a growing demand for working women and the interests of the employers coincided with those of the workers.

Most institutions for children under three have always had a primarily welfare character with little concern for the educational needs of the child. "Medical" reasons were advanced for restricting the access of parents and the institutions were staffed and supervised - and still are,for that matter - by personnel with, if anything, health or nursing qualifications, rather than educational.

In recent years the topic of early childhood has received considerable attention, both from scientific researchers and from those responsible for social and educational policy. Although there is less than complete satisfaction with all forms of provision, attitudes towards them have changed radically and most parents (no matter from which social class and independently from the mothers' work) want some form of pre-school experience for their children, mainly because it is considered good to have some social and intellectual experience outside the home, starting from 2-3 years of age. The issue of day care centres for children from the very first months of life is going through the same process but also has special problems of its own. One problem with the crèche is that it is by no means just a matter of how well it is organised and what kind of care it provides. It exposes many conflicts in the contemporary family and - to a certain extent - it questions the family's full adequacy to bring up the child during its first years of life. Thus, it becomes an emotional issue as hard to look at objectively, and improvement of the service becomes difficult.

Professionals are no less biased against crèches than anyone else; doctors are afraid of the health risks brought about by a community of very small children, and psychologists assume that the crèches are like residential institutions with the same negative effects extensively analysed in the literature.

While it is true that some old crèches and some residential institutions were very much alike, it is now becoming clear that the effects of any institution depend heavily on the quality of care.

The anti-crèche lobby also seeks support in Bowlby's (1951, 1958) theory of attachment and separation. Bowlby argues that during the first year of life the child needs an opportunity to form a primary attachment to one adult figure, generally the mother, and that this is a necessary condition for much of the cognitive, emotional and social development of the child. The devastating effects of total mother-child separation he observed during the first years of life are used to further the argument against the rearing of the child outside the family for part of the day.

However, the inference that crèches necessarily have negative effects is not justified. Bowlby himself emphasizes that the attachment bond is grounded more on the quality than on the quantity of mother-child interaction; it seems to be proved that it is essential for the child to form attachment bonds but not necessarily with one person alone; the separation considered in the literature is traumatic and generally associated with a deprived environment, with no opportunity for the child regularly to interact with stable adult figures.

Some qualms, however, should be relieved by day-care centres that gradually introduce the child and allow the parents to be present whenever they wish or are needed, and provide adequate stimulation and stable staffing. There are reasons to think that the prejudice against crèches is closely linked with the view that woman's role is primarily to be a mother, absolutely irreplaceable in the family and therefore excluded from any other work.

On the other hand, and equally unrealistically, the crèche is sometimes seen as the answer to most of the problems of the family, as a way of integrating the child into the social community from a very early stage. It can be a way for the nuclear family to overcome its isolation and have collective experiences; it can also stimulate the research for new patterns of education.

But research does not say much about possible effects of the crèche on the parents: if the parents entrust the care of the child from his earliest months to an institution, will it be possible for them to adjust to the child, to learn to understand him and to modify their lives according to his needs? What conditions are required for the crèche to allow and foster the reciprocal adaptation of parents and child?

Demand for provision for infants and very young children, in particular for day care centres, is steadily growing. In a crèche the child can be given the opportunity to have experiences and activities which would be impossible at home: he can run, jump, climb, play with colours and water without giving his mother extra work and extra stress; with the help of trained staff he can improve his cognitive and linguistic skills, he can play freely (and noisily) with other children without fear of restriction. The crèche also relieves the parents for a while from the responsibility of the child; they may then be more eager to stay with him and be more relaxed during the time they spend together, thereby promoting the growth of a sound and balanced relationship. The crèche can be - specially for children living in the countryside - a first opportunity for integration into a larger group, preventing isolation; for their parents it can also be the first opportunity to think about new and broader educational perspectives. Furthermore the crèche can provide an opportunity to meet other adults, to exchange experiences and to learn about children.

Why then, in the light of all this, is the crèche such a controversial issue and why is it often unable to function in these ways? Clearly one answer is that users and staff alike are beset by the conflicts already discussed. Some problems are caused by parents' attitudes; they may tend either to completely entrust the child to the crèche, avoiding any involvement in the running of the service and, to some extent, losing contact with the child himself; or - on the other hand - they may try to exercise too much control on any initiative. In both cases it becomes very difficult for the child to establish a sound relationship with both his family and the new environment. One of the main problems of the crèche is therefore always to find a balance between the parents' involvement and the staff autonomy.

In the next section we shall look at how day care is provided in practice for very young children, going on to consider some experiments. In particular, we shall devote some attention to the phenomenon of "gestione sociale" in Italy, a movement which seems to have much to offer in the field of day care.

E. HOW IS CARE PROVIDED?

There are a number of models. Some are designed specifically for certain groups (e.g. factory crèches for children of working mothers; centres for handicapped children or disadvantaged children). Some are fully under parental control (e.g. many play groups). There may be some professional support in the running of these, and some financial aid may be provided from the public funds as in Australia, New Zealand and Britain. Some services are part-time only (e.g. play groups and some nursery schools).

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A further distinction is between "domestic" services (daily minding or family day care) with or without local authority support, and "institutional" services centred on a building which is not a private dwelling and which normally takes a larger number of children.

1. Family day care

Most children under the age of two or three years are looked after by mothers or other relatives, and any day care outside the home is likely to be also undertaken largely by relatives. Child minding by paid minders who look after children in the minders' own homes is claimed to provide a copy of this situation. Its virtues are said to be that the services are provided by a single maternal figure, in a domestic environment and with only two or three young children to look after, rather than a series of nurses, in an institutional environment, in which there are many young children with competing needs and demands. A "domestic" service also commends itself to the public authorities because it is cheap - it provides, in the words of a recent conference called by the English Department of Health, "low cost day care" (DHSS/DES.1976).

Unfortunately, private organised day care of this sort is beset by many problems. Since, unlike other forms of ECCE, it is usually not subsidised, the parents have to meet the full costs. Even though these are likely to be less than the costs of nursery care (since it takes place in a private dwelling, and the minder works for much less than the salary of a paid professional), the cost to the working mother is often high, as a proportion of her income. To the minder the profit is however very small, unless she looks after too many children. What happens in practice, therefore, is that the minder has to save on food, spend very little on toys, prevent the children from damaging the furniture. She is unlikely to be able to take them out, since in busy streets no single person can manage more than two or three young children. The minder is likely also to have little interaction with the children, who are in turn likely to spend much of the day sleeping or doing nothing. And because the job has such low status and is so poorly paid the minders are not likely to go on doing it for long. For these reasons and because mothers may not be able to pay, or mothers and minders may fall out, or the children be unable to settle, or prove too difficult for the minder, these private day care arrangements tend to be unstable. Children get moved from minder to minder - it has been estimated in France for example (Le Monde 19/5/76) that 50 per cent of "minded" children had changed minder four or five times before they were three years old. Corroborative evidence of instability of care comes from a London study carried out by Mayall and Petrie (1977) and from American writing on the subject.

Another recent English study, carried out in Oxfordshire (Bryant et al.), as well as the London study and other anecdotal evidence, points to the rather quiet, subdued behaviour of a substantial proportion of minded children.

Nevertheless, children are so "minded" in all Member countries and child-minding provides a significant proportion of the day care available; given the cost considerations, it will, it seems, continue to do so. Almost all countries are therefore making some effort to improve the service. This means that a two- or even three-tier system of family day care is emerging; the private minder, registered at a minimum level, for which the legislation is everywhere being surprisingly alike and involving considerations of physical health, moral probity and safety of premises, dealing directly with the mother over fees, hours and so on, and the "official minders" who may be attached to a crèche or day nursery, and who may be salaried, or at any rate subsidised, by the state or the local authority. Such systems are described in Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, all of whom have devoted considerable resources to upgrading this form of care. Denmark in particular has tried to build up a network of "day care mothers" paying particular attention to selection, training and supervision, with some success; parents with a choice were for the first time opting for family day care rather than nurseries. Even this effort has not been without its problems; and at the time of writing the whole question is once more being considered at government level. Another interesting variant occurs in Belgium, particularly in rural areas where no institutions exist to which minders might be attached; so-called "services de gardiennes" are organised, consisting of at least 10 minders, each taking a maximum of three children.

However, even improved systems such as these are ultimately subject to many of the problems mentioned earlier, and much more study is needed of the effects of family day care. One such study, small-scale and narrowly focused, is being carried out in Denmark(1) which compares children in various forms of care; such studies might be replicated in other Member countries.

2. Group day care

There are numerous variants on the theme of day care centres, in the way in which they are set up and the children - and parents - for whom they cater. Terminology in this area is confused; "crèche" and "nursery" are both sometimes used to cover all types but both are also sometimes used to denote one particular kind. They are used here in a general meaning.

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1) Professors Kyng and Poulsen at the University of Århus.

a) Nurseries set up by local or municipal authorities out of public funds. Because of the high cost of such provision, when properly housed and staffed, this is almost always a very scarce resource and is, as a result, used almost exclusively for children considered by the authorities to be "at risk". The Kamerman and Kahn paper quoted earlier outlined the criteria by which such children are selected.

b) Crèches set up by welfare or charitable organisations, mainly for families considered unable, for economic or social reasons, to take proper care of their own children. Many of these provide that kind of depriving environment, very similar to hospitalisation or residential institutions, which provide the justification for bias against crèches as such. Their staff are often poorly trained or with only health-oriented training; staff turnover is high; organisation is very rigid; adult/child ratios are very low; educational materials are scarce.

c) Crèches set up by private institutions, or groups with generally ideological motivations such as the Women's Movement, Reichians, Maoists. None of these groups are profit-oriented and they often respond to specific needs of certain groups and areas. Nevertheless, it may be that they often end up providing élite experiences since they have to rely mainly on the fees paid by the families or on co-operative staffing by parent volunteers which is more easily obtainable in middle-class environments, where the capacity of mothers and volunteers to organise and obtain funds and help is greater.

d) Crèches erected by professionals and researchers for disadvantaged children. They are meant to give an opportunity to these children who, because of their family background, are likely to face school failure and, generally, social problems. Under this heading belong some successful American experiments. Although such initiatives are clearly education-oriented, and have in some instances produced very encouraging results and have been an opportunity for research, nonetheless their emphasis on disadvantaged children severely limits their possible effects on socialisation. Usually what happens is that experts set up a curriculum based on what they consider to be universally valid cultural values, which generally coincide with those of the middle class. The child - and in some cases his family - goes through a series of planned activities: it is what is called an enrichment programme. These experiments, though interesting, are difficult to generalise, may lead to an early streaming of children that may be undesirable. Many do not exert an influence on the general environment, unless they establish some direct and permanent link with the community at large.

e) Crèches set up by public administrations (central or local), often under pressure from trade unions. As we saw earlier, they usually come under the supervision of Ministries of Health and Welfare and connections rarely exist with education authorities. They also have to face the difficult problem of balancing public control and internal autonomy. Perhaps it is in crèches of this kind - which we will discuss in greater detail - that some of the most interesting innovations are to be found, both from the point of view of education and with respect to the integration of services for the child and for the family.

f) Two experimental, demonstration centres different from all these have been set up in London and are being studied by the Thomas Coram Research Unit.

The objective of the London centres is to serve the needs of populations in geographically compact areas, all families living within pram-pushing distance of the centre being eligible to make use of the services. The centres are open during working hours, and in principle places are available on a full-day or part-day basis for any child whose family chooses to avail themselves of the service. No research-based programme innovations have been possible within the centres, which maintain standards of excellence based on traditional nursery school lines. However, each centre has a child health clinic attached. This is used by virtually all families living in the catchment areas, irrespective of the use made otherwise of the centres. There is limited parental involvement through mothers' clubs, but none in the day-to-day running of the centres.

The idea of children's centres is capable of expansion and variation, and mixed patterns of "family" day care (child minding and professional services) are clearly possible. Demonstration projects could enable:

a) estimates of take-up of services (as opposed to expressed desire for them) to be made;

b) innovations in staffing and curriculum if more parental and volunteer involvement was secured, and if more use was made of students and young people;

c) such centres would also provide bases for effective health surveillance of the total population of young children living in the vicinity through the attachment of a health visitor and the sessional attendance of a paediatrician;

d) in a network of such services some could be staffed and equipped to deal with the special needs of handicapped

> children, nearly all of whom might be better placed in educational settings containing a majority of normal children - provided, that is, the special needs of the handicapped were able to be met, and that specialist advisory staff were able to act in a consultant capacity to assist parents and teachers to cope.

Other countries are also experimenting with different forms of day care centre which get away from the welfare priority provision model. Sweden, for instance, under its Commission on Family Aid has recently set up one small (12 places) experimental nursery in a flat; parental participation, in the form of an obligation to work with the day nursery staff for 1½ days a month, is an essential part of the scheme; the emphasis is on "creating pedagogues out of necessity", and all decision making is shared between parents and staff.

There is no doubt that any form of day care for very young children is costly, so much so as to make it unlikely that it will ever be universally available as a public service; however, the issue of costs is rarely if ever considered in the light of other economic, let alone social, benefits, which might accrue from the provision. It is also assumed that a service would always be staffed by fully-trained professionals; one way of reducing costs would be to make far more use of volunteers and "para-professionals". This would at the same time shed light on another major preoccupation of those in the pre-school field, parent involvement has been tried in some areas, notably by the Pre-school Play Group Movement in Britain, although only part-time care is provided under their auspices. Another notable experiment which is attempting to use voluntary help has been taking place in Italy under the title of "gestione sociale" where, as well as involving parents, the running, the whole structure and control of the nurseries has been opened up to the community.

This term, now commonly used in Italy, was first introduced in Emilia Romagna in the sixties. It was intended as a new way to run the school by connecting it with the main political and social issues of the community. It is based on the sharing of responsibilities in the running of the school system and of the single schools, between the traditional school components (teachers, experts, educational officers) and the social components outside the school (area councils, parents, workers' unions, cultural groups, etc.). The aim was not only to democratise the highly centralised school system, but also to renew the content of the school curriculum, orienting it towards the analysis of the social world around the child. Finally, these initiatives aimed at stimulating a higher involvement of the people in the running of public services; they were part of a broader design of local self-government which is a major and recent feature of the political programme of the Left in Italy.

We shall try here to describe some features of those developments known as "gestione sociale". It is by no means a general solution, nor is it working effectively everywhere. Participation has to be obtained through a long, patient effort not only confined to educational problems but extended to every aspect of the life of the community. "Gestione sociale" has proved valid where there was a real receptiveness to political participation, and a nucleus of working class people with political or union experience. As yet it is in many cases a failure or an unattained goal but the existing positive examples in Emilia Romagna, Umbria, Lombardy, Tuscany, and the continuing efforts to achieve it are reasons enough to describe some aspects of it in greater detail.

By Law 1044, 1971, crèches as a public service were set up in Italy within a highly decentralised framework: local administrations would plan for the crèches on a regional basis, financing them to a large extent with government funds. In this law it was established as a matter of policy for the first time that representatives of the community were to be involved in the running of the crèche.

Experiments in participation had already been going on for several years in the pre-schools of some regions governed by the Left; participation was not meant to be a pure extension of the contacts with the families, but the actual involving of families and other citizens in the programming and running of the schools in every respect: financing, determining criteria for admission, curriculum development, teachers' training.

From the very beginning a new and important feature of these initiatives was the extension of the participation on the governing board of the school not only to teachers and families and representatives of the local authorities, but also to other members of the community, such as representatives of the trade unions and other organised groups existing in the area.

The crèche is actually managed by a Committee which is the governing board; it is formed by teachers' representatives, parents' representatives (elected by them), representatives of the local authorities, unions and any other organised group in the area. The Committee discusses the curriculum, approves and modifies it and has administrative responsibilities. It fixes the criteria for admission to the crèche if the available places are not enough to meet the demand, determines the fees to be paid by the families according to income, takes initiatives for the organisation of outdoor activities for the children, keeps in contact with other schools and with the medical and social services of the area. The Committee is responsible to the general assembly of parents which is open to any interested member of the community.

It is worth drawing attention to the fact that professionals working in the area (psychologists, doctors, etc.) participate as consultants only. The "gestione sociale" makes it clear that the crèche is not to be run according to prevailing "technical" criteria, and "experts" might easily overpower ordinary people who are already afraid of or over-dependent on their opinions.

Born as a political issue and a radical novelty, the "gestione sociale" has turned out to be - where it is carried on with perseverance and honesty - a very effective educational instrument. The teachers' group, for example, can operate with considerable autonomy, and Tizard demonstrated that teachers' freedom from hierarchical constrictions is positively correlated with the quality of education. Yet they are responsible both to the community and for involving the community. This structure does not grant parents' participation from the beginning: in fact, this is the final goal. But the effective sharing of decisions with them and the emphasis put on community involvement are very valuable tools for the integration of the school in the environment.

The "gestione sociale" obviously has many implications for experiments in day care elsewhere; one aspect which remains unclear is how much impact the movement has on the actual daily life of the classroom. If it does succeed in drawing other adults - parents and non-parents - into the nurseries to help, the cost benefit could be considerable.

Whatever forms of service are finally agreed nationally in different countries, certain criteria require to be met if the services are to be considered adequate. Some guidelines are given below.

F. CRITERIA FOR AN ADEQUATE SERVICE

a) The service should be local. In urban areas at least, pre-school services should normally be within walking distance of the home - the sort of walking distance that is feasible with two small children in tow. This means not having to cross busy roads, or to walk very far. If each pre-school centre served a small catchment area most of the children who came to it would live near by.

b) The service should be free. One of the most discriminatory anomalies of the present service in practially all countries is that nursery education is free while parental contributions are expected of play group and day nursery users, the former paying a flat rate, the latter according to their means.

c) The service should be planned and supervised by one authority. In most countries, both nationally and locally, the present division of responsibility between social services and education authorities makes little sense. Not only is the division difficult to justify, but it perpetuates anomalies of payment, availability and placement. At present welfare services are highly selective, being designed for the deviant and deprived, whereas education services are in principle available to all sectors of the community. The present situation makes co-ordinated planning virtually impossible. The need for the education and care of young children to be the overall responsibility of one authority at national and local level seems clear. The responsibility must embrace children from birth onwards and cover health, education and care throughout the day and year - not just during school hours and terms.

However, planning and supervision by one statutory agency does not mean that this agency must itself actually supply all services. A substantial proportion of public funds for pre-school services might be used to finance voluntary provision; indeed voluntary centres might be entitled to public funds for both capital and running costs provided they met certain criteria and standards, such as those outlined here. This could lead for instance to the growth of nursery centres initiated by communities or parents.

The actual balance between statutory and voluntary provision under the designated supervising authority for pre-school services remains to be worked out; but the contribution of both types of provision is as essential to future services as units of overall responsibility.

d) The service should be organised so that children are not allocated services simply according to their family's social need or the hours required. The present hotch-potch of pre-school provision (day nurseries, factory nurseries, nursery schools, nursery classes, reception classes, play groups, minders) and the distribution of children among them, reflect a mixture of historical accident, needs (of parents especially) for particular hours of care, the local availability of services and the criteria of admission. The needs of the child rarely figure. Each type of service has its own set of hours, not normally adjusted to the needs of parents and child. We require a much greater integration of services: if diversity remains it should be on the basis not of hours and age but of philosophy and attitudes, so that it offers parents within a locality a real choice. We should, in short, have fewer types of service but greater variety of services within multi-purpose local centres. Day nurseries and nursery schools illustrate the social segregation that occurs when services are neither locally based nor multi-purpose. Three-

and four-year-old children, with similar educational and social needs, are distributed between these two services - each with its own type of staff, orientation and objectives - because the needs, and usually the social circumstances, of their parents differ. As a consequence, the most deprived children are to be found in day nurseries while more advantaged children receive nursery education.

e) The service should provide a wide range of functions and be available to parents on demand. Greater integration of services should not mean greater uniformity in services offered. A centre providing for those demands at present met by play groups, day nurseries and nursery schools, must be able to offer a range of hours - from two to nine hours a day - and all-year opening, at least five days a week. The main aim of an integrated pre-school centre should be to offer high quality care for young children in its catchment area, at the age and, within reason, for the hours that their parents want. The service must therefore be available to all families, and not selective in its intake, and must be based on demand, not need.

A centre for day care and education might also offer a range of other services to young families living locally, even perhaps to the local community as a whole. For example, a welfare clinic; a toy and a book library; clothes-washing facilities (if these are not readily available elsewhere); a meeting place for local groups; a food co-operative.

f) Health is important too. Epidemiological surveys have shown that there is a high incidence of untreated medical and behavioural pathology among young children. In general, parents take their children to the family doctor for acute illnesses, but they fail to consult him for chronic problems of development delay or dysfunction, or seek advice for behavioural problems which are a major cause of concern. We require to unify primary care and community medicine for children. The public health nurse, looking after the well-being of all children in a geographically defined population, has a central role here. In addition nursery centres require a paediatrician who visits them regularly and frequently, and who concerns himself with treatment as well as assessment. The need for this is clear enough. What we lack at present are doctors and nurses who have the time and the skills to work in this way.

There are differences from one place to another as to how the "gestione" is actually organised, since every local administration is free to set its own regulations and they vary considerably; but we shall describe mainly those experiences advanced in terms of autonomy of the governing board.

The "gestione sociale" in the crèches is at present organised as follows: teachers and often also non-teaching members of the staff form a group which is supposed to meet frequently to handle everyday problems and work out the main lines of the curriculum, possibly asking the assistance of an "expert" from the team working in the area; they also elect a co-ordinator who is in charge for a limited period and who represents the group and usually has administrative functions. The fact that non-teaching personnel are involved in the management of the crèche is a much-debated issue. Experiments in Bologna, having gone as far as exchanging roles between trained teachers and other members of the staff, have been carried out.

The idea behind these tentative experiments is again the integration of the experiences of the child: the child should not experience from his infancy a strict hierarchical division of roles. Furthermore, any form of work and experience, cooking, gardening and cleaning, as much as more structured learning activities, are very valuable for the child. These form the core of his home experience and should therefore be regarded as equally valuable in the crèche.

As for psychological services for young children, they are almost non-existent. The few child psychologists in paediatric and psychiatric units who see many young children are almost all in assessment units, and educational psychologists as a rule spend very little time with children under compulsory school age. Again the shortages are of time and of skills; and as with the doctors so with the psychologists. The structure of local authority services, and the traditional definition of professional roles, prevent effective services from developing.

As a matter of course those concerned with the health and well-being of young children in nurseries must also be in contact with their parents. Probably the most successful way of doing so is through the establishment of an infant welfare or child-health clinic at the centre itself.

g) Collaboration between parents and professionals. A nursery centre will only be effective if it meets the needs and wishes of the parents. Many parents have a strong desire to share in the care of young children in an organised way, as the phenomenal success of play groups, and the enthusiasm of those who take part in them, indicates. In day nurseries and even nursery schools this desire remains largely unfulfilled. Parents do not as a rule take a significant part in the day-to-day work of the nursery. Instead, the professional training of nurses and teachers fosters the belief that nursery care is really a job for professionals. (That is why the play group movement, which disputed this, was greeted with some hostility by professional organisations.) We have yet to work out satisfactory institutional structures which would promote and sustain effective collaboration among professional staff and parents (and other volunteers). Until we do this, the important ingredient "working with parents" will not be seen as an essential part of all staff training and all nursery practice.

Working with parents does not mean simply helping mothers with their difficulties, or holding mothers' classes. It should mean enlisting the active participation of parents in the day-to-day life of the nursery, learning from as well as teaching them, working together. To learn how to do this is perhaps the hardest skill for professional people to learn and practise; yet without this partnership the nursery is impoverished, and will always be short-staffed.

Parents must play a much larger part than they do today in the formulation of nursery goals and in the care and education of young children in nursery care if the services are to function effectively and provide places for all young children whose families wish them to attend.

h) The staffing of the service should be broad-based and flexible. Pre-school services need to draw more widely, for their paid workers, on two groups in the community with much more potentiality to offer: young men, and middle-aged and older people of both sexes, especially those with experience of raising their own families. Apart from the reserves of talent and experience in these two groups, largely untapped at present, the current female monopoly of staffing, especially with so many younger women employed, reinforces the limited range of adult relationships that young children are increasingly faced with. To encourage the recruitment of middle-aged men and women, but also because it is not clear that existing training is necessarily the best we could have, more emphasis should be put on in-service training and less on longer, general courses. Greater integration of existing services, and of the agencies responsible for them, will require a more rational system of staffing, and a reformulation of the training and roles of nursery nurses and teachers. Current attempts to integrate day nursery and nursery

> school services within the centre too often lead to the establishment of what are in practice separate day nursery and nursery school units, each with its own groups of staff, linked only through sharing a common site. This is not what we mean by an integrated and multi-purpose children's centre. However, the distinction between nursery nurses and teachers - for instance over status and work conditions - impedes the setting up of a genuinely integrated service in which all needs are met by one group of staff in a multi-purpose neighbourhood centre.

All of the issues raised here require study, experiment and discussion. But to undertake this implies a readiness to admit the need to review and change the well-established forms of provision on which future developments have been planned. Today's services are not simply inadequate in quantity; they are also fragmented and unresponsive to changing needs. One of the few benefits of the present bleak economic climate is that it may offer a chance to review existing policies, experiment with new options and work out better policies not just for pre-school services but for families with young children also.

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II

INTEGRATION BETWEEN THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR AND THE HEALTH AND WELFARE SECTOR IN THE CONTEXT OF POLICIES FOR CHILDREN

by

Björn Sandgren

A. INTRODUCTION

Previous work within the CERI Early Childhood Project has shown that solutions to the problems of early childhood cannot be confined to a psychological frame of reference. Neither is it sufficient to expand the context to include formal education. The social and intellectual support measures provided at school do not suffice to give disadvantaged children a reasonable chance to catch up with their better-off classmates. Intellectual and emotional development takes place within a broader social field than formal education. A child is under continual social pressure. Everything which makes him a human being is learned. This process begins very early. Personality-formative experience is not particularly dramatic. It is from the events of everyday life - success and failure, happiness and confusion, insecurity and security - that experiences are stored which go to build up the child's ego-conception. A child's personality is created out of unstructured and imprecise experience long before he begins school. In the formal educational environment the ego-conception takes on significant contours. Through a process of concrete evaluation each child finds out how "good" or "bad" he is, how well he fits into the group, or into the school system.

If we assume that an individual is, on average, awake 12 hours a day until he is 16 years old, then he has had 70,000 hours to learn and experience who he is. When he starts school (at 7) he has already had 30,000 learning-hours in which to establish an initial capital in the form of willingness, trust, intellectual curiosity and emotional security which he can invest in his education.

Because of differences in conditions of upbringing, this initial capital is already far from equally distributed at the beginning of formal education. In order to achieve equality by the time school is finished, therefore, we need to do much more than attempt to ensure that disadvantaged children be given, in compensation, a greater portion of the resources which school has to offer. The entire 9-year educational cycle comprises approximately 10,000 hours of formal learning. This time is also made up of about 30,000 hours of leisure time and holidays. Even if the entire educational cycle were to constitute a compensatory and equalising process for learning and working - which it by no means does - informal experiences and learning outside school constantly reinforce the original inequalities.

Education is part of society. Unresolved problems and contradictions in social structure show up as pedagogical problems in education. They emerge even more tangibly as personal problems among those who are being educated and those who are doing the teaching. Powerlessness, lack of motivation, psychic and somatic disturbances, educational blocks, inability to make progress and boredom are everyday concrete experiences within the educational context.

Despite all the expectations which have been vested in the potential of education as an instrument of equality, and despite a considerable redirection of resources within the educational sector, all experience points to the impossibility of solving basic equality problems within the framework of education. To give everyone the same prerequisites for personal development and participation in the development of society is outside the realm of education.

In Sweden, society took responsibility for primary school education as long ago as the mid-1800s. This education is compulsory, free, and for all. The responsibility for providing this education fell upon the municipal authorities. Since economic resources varied from one part of the country to another, it took nearly 100 years to achieve reasonably uniform educational standards throughout the country.

Hence, if schools are to provide, in practice, an equal education for all children regardless of social background, sex, or place of residence, a battle must be waged on both the social and political fronts.

When compulsory education was instituted, the situation was such that in the context of both the means of production and the social structure, adolescent children were a source of income to the working classes. They could, according to their ability, contribute to the upkeep of the family. Sending the children to school could, therefore, mean a pair of hands less and a drain on the family's resources. Because of this many people could not afford to let their children have a complete basic education.

Among the economic and educational élite there was no particular need for such a common basic education for all since they could afford, and had the means, to arrange education for their own children through tutors and private lessons. From an ideological point of view, collaboration between the different classes of society had no outstanding intrinsic value, rather the opposite.

A common basic education for all children implies a reduction in personal freedom and in the family's influence over children's upbringing. It also implies a channelling of society's resources to its most disadvantaged members.

This principle is, today, widely recognised and has been generally accepted by the political parties in as far as it applies to primary school education.

Primary school education is, today, a social service which is enjoyed by all as a natural part of social life. But this has not always been the case. At first it appeared as a demand on society's resources which was not always looked upon with approval either by the poor or the rich.

The structure of society has changed very fundamentally since the battle was waged for compulsory education. Today the social issue is not that all children must go to school, but that they do not go long enough. Children are no longer considered as a pool of cheap labour. Indeed, there is no place for young people without a secondary education in our productive society. Unemployment figures (1976) for young people with only a primary school education are twice as high as for the population as a whole. The custodial function of school is of increasing importance. It is a problem today for many families that the length of the school day and the school year do not coincide with the working hours of professional life.

Society's care-taking and custodial functions have not expanded within the preventive health and social welfare sectors to the same extent as within the education sector.

The health and social welfare services have been designed less for the needs of the population as a whole than for those of marginal groups, i.e. groups with special needs and individuals in emergency situations.

It is still generally considered that parents have primary responsibility for the care and upbringing of their children. This responsibility, this right, which is foisted upon parents rests on the assumption that all parents have the capacity and the desire to give their children reasonable material and physical standards as well as intellectual stimulation and emotional security.

It is, then, the group of children and parents who cannot manage to fulfil the demands of "normality" for whom the care-taking and custodial functions of society have been expanded.

In the general consciousness, therefore, families who need to call upon or receive help from these service organisations are in some way stigmatised. From a historical point of view the care-taking and custodial functions of society have been tantamount to coercion, social control, and bureaucratic power. Accepting help and experiencing humiliation have gone hand in hand.

The social welfare policy of society has slowly accommodated itself to the structural changes in social life. Because of the technico-industrial revolution and its social consequences the traditional problems of survival which are concomitant with physical poverty and poor health have been largely conquered.

Being a child today is in many respects easier than it was 50 years ago. The developments in technology and production have given us the affluent society. For most families material well-being and living standards are very high compared to what they were a few decades ago. As a rule people are well fed and well dressed. They have work and good housing conditions. Good health and education are commodities which are taken for granted. Modes of upbringing are changing. Young children are not as a rule socialised into obedience and conformity by coercive methods and corporal punishment. There are fewer children in each family. Children are more likely to be well provided for. Thanks to various social-political reforms more resources have been allocated to improve the well-being of the child. Advances in medicine and paediatrics have greatly increased the chances of surviving birth and early childhood and many serious child diseases are now little more than inconveniences. Preventive care is given to the child from early childhood and throughout school by the health service system. The day-care sector is expanding. Pre-school facilities and educational opportunities are growing. But alongside these developments, new and more subtle living problems have been created by the same process which has virtually eliminated the traditional scourges.

Is this a fair description of the situation?

This description of the changed situation of the child is only partly true. It is true for the élite. We know that there is still an inequitable distribution of wealth, health and educational opportunities in society. We know that social origin, race and sex still determine the social development of the child.

When we move down the scale of social class we find poverty amid abundance; a greater propensity to ill health; and brutality and violence in upbringing. This situation seems to be common to most European countries. The correlation between social class and the prevalence of ill health is repeatedly stressed in the Court Report (1976).

"When we pass from the children of professional families to those of unskilled workers there is a significant increase in bedwetting, squints, stuttering, dental disease and non-infective seizures, and bronchitis and pneumonia and infective diarrhea are more frequent and more severe. Disease does not occur in a bodily system but in a child, a member of a particular family living in a particular community. Illness in childhood cannot be fully understood without reference to the child's development and social circumstances. Conventional classifications fail to reveal the adverse social factors that may lie behind a diagnostic label and contribute to the form, management and outcome of the illness." (Court Report, 1976, p.50).

An increasingly democratic view of society coupled with higher material standards have over time resulted in a change in the character of social health and welfare. The control wielded by the authorities and the coercive methods used in rehabilitation are slowly giving way to a social service approach; the social services will exist to serve not only individuals in need, but the community at large. It will serve the general public in a mainly preventive way, with positive change as its goal.

This shift in policy is a first prerequisite for any integration between the education sector and the child health and welfare sector. When the different social organisations are characterised by differing basic philosophies the result is conflicting operations in practical day-to-day work.

But a shift in policy is one thing - a change in reality another.

The social service functions which affect early childhood and impinge on the education sector are primarily maternal health and welfare, child health and welfare and pre-school education.

B. MATERNAL CARE AND CHILD HEALTH CARE

In Sweden, the primary responsibility for children's health and welfare rests with the county councils. When the children begin school, responsibility shifts to the municipal authorities. School health care in primary and secondary school is covered by the school legislation. The most important organisations with responsibility for children's health from 0-7 years of age are the pre-natal and post-natal and child health centres. More than other sectors in social welfare these centres have been developed into service institutions for all. Their expansion has its roots in an interaction between individual needs and societal demands.

High infant mortality and puerperal fever resulting in death were tangible realities well into the twentieth century. In the mid-1930s the birth rate had sunk to its lowest level as a result of conscious family planning. Economic, social and political reasons now existed for investing in preventive mother-and-child care. At the end of the 1950s free maternity care was instituted as well as federal grants for preventive mother-and-child care. Thus the customary practices of childbearing were changed, and fewer children were born at home. From the late 1950s onwards practically all children were born in well-equipped maternity wards. This development along with improved means of diagnosis and higher standards of hygiene have reduced infant mortality to one of the lowest in the world.

Against a background of high infant mortality and risk of infection, maternity care is defined as a medical service. Mother-and-child care, on the other hand, may be considered as a health service. This difference in categorisation has made co-operation between medical and health services difficult.

Child and pre-natal health centres were very quickly expanded to become a social service for all. At present about 95 per cent of all pregnant women go to the pre-natal health centres. The corresponding figure for the child health centres are also very high. By the age of 1-2 years about 98 per cent of all children have been examined at a child health centre.

Preventive pre-natal care has a socio-medical aim, i.e. it is intended to assist and prepare women for coping with the strains of pregnancy and delivery. The educational aspect is hence not confined to preparation for delivery but also covers the continued development of family life.

If one only considers the quantitative expansion of socio-medical service catering for all aspects of childbearing, the situation appears to be very satisfactory. Social welfare reaches, in principle, all children and mothers at maternity wards and at post- and pre-natal health centres. But a critical survey of the combined functions of pre-natal health centres, maternity wards and post-natal health centres reveals great deficiencies.

If one considers the form and content of the preparatory education for mothers in a psychological perspective, the situation is far from satisfactory. It is doubtful whether the current organisation and focus of the preparatory education for mothers succeeds in reaching the individuals who have the greatest need for society's welfare-, supportive- and educational programmes.

In a doctoral thesis published in 1976, W. Lundh summarised her findings as regards which women attend and which do not attend the preparatory classes:

> "The women who participate (in classes offered by pre-natal health centres) are in many respects a privileged group with a better social and economic background than those who do not participate. The hopes which were expressed in the 1940s and 1950s of reaching, through pre-natal care, women with different social handicaps in order to impart expert advice and information and thereby increase their chances of giving their children as good a physical and psychological start as possible, have not been realised; despite more than 90% participation in preventive pre-natal health care, attendance at preparatory classes has been disappointing.

> Through discussions with midwives at the pre-natal health centres and with others engaged in working with immigrants, I have been led to understand that this lack of participation in preparatory classes has its roots in such factors as language difficulties, shift work, childminding and cultural differences. Between the groups of participating and non-participating expectant mothers with already one or more children there were significant differences in education, income, marital status, and planning of pregnancy, though not as regards age, amount of illness, degree of employment, tendency to anxiety, or co-habitation with the child's father. Socio-economic factors such as educational level and income thus play an important part in recruitment to these courses." (W. Lundh, 1976, pp.272-273).

In a scientific report published in 1975, Signe Ohlsson emphasises the somatic and medico-technical treatment at post and pre-natal health centres.

> "In our society pain in the body is permitted, but not in the soul. This attitude provides an important partial explanation as to why mental health problems have to become somatic for anyone to pay attention to them or at least to the body. It follows that in today's maternal and child care a person is primarily considered as a body. Attention to physical illnesses and handicaps have priority. Traditionally child and parent are designated as 'patient', which has immediate consequences on our relationship to the parent, the type of service we give, etc. We are taught both in health care education and in our practical work that we are experts, in deciding the type and formulation of treatment. We must be able to give concrete advice. We know what is best for each individual. This point of view implies in turn that a person is seen as a thing, as a passive object without the capacity to have an opinion of what is best for himself. This attitude toward people is an intrinsic aspect of the hierarchy of authority which traditionally typifies the health and medical service organisation. This way of relating to children and parents is completely negative to preventive psychological health service." (S.Ohlsson, 1975, pp. 14-15.)

The author also emphasises lack of resources. If one divides available time by the number of patients, it becomes clear that a very short period is allotted to each person who needs help:

> "Many doctors, nurses and midwives are certainly aware that during a visit of 7 or 8 minutes it is impossible to get an adequate picture of the degree of psychological disturbance

> in expectant and new parents or of the child's psycho-social development. And who, indeed, would bring up a difficult life-problem during those brief moments? Giving priority to technico-medical aspects and effectiveness calculated in cold figures is entirely in line with industrial efficiency. The important thing in the health and medical care of today seems to be achievement of the highest possible throughput. This must to a great extent be due to our general lack of insight into people's inner lives and into what such greater insight could give us as human beings." (ibid, p.10).

It is clear that there are conflicting guiding images and problems of co-ordination within the socio-medical service sectors. A co-ordinated medical welfare service aimed at the whole life situation of children and adults demands continuity in preventive care; that is,in pre-natal health care, maternity wards, and post-natal health care.

But above and beyond this essential co-ordination is the necessity for a critical examination of overall goals and present working methods. Are the educational aims and strategies and the design of medical health treatment on a par with the social and psychological problems confronting the present-day family? Does the educational aspect of preventive medicine have any socially supportive effect on those who need it most? Does it have a positive and conflict-solving effect on the family situation and on the child's future psychological health? Many of these questions receive negative answers from professionals and specialists within preventive medicine.

In recent years these qualitative problems have surfaced in preventive medicine and social welfare policy discussions. In 1973 a government commission - "the Child-Care Group" - was set up in Sweden with responsibility for studying, investigating, and evaluating an integrated and socially conflict-solving parental education. A large number of research-and-development studies were initiated by this commission.

A co-ordination of the health-care sector and the educational sector can be attained either through the creation of new co-ordinating organisations or through functional changes in already established organisations. But organisational changes are seldom effective unless those involved are able to take a fresh view of what they do and why they do it.

People's points of view do not change because of decisions from above or because the organisation or framework for their activities changes. A changed outlook requires a long process of analysis within the working team in which its members successively build up new goals and new approaches to co-operation through active experimentation. This problem becomes particularly apparent when people with different educational backgrounds have to work together as a team. The cross-section of individuals from the child care, health care, and education sectors comprises people in different positions with different educational backgrounds. There are great variations in these people's educational status, competence, salaries and working schedules and these have a direct impact on their abilities and capacity to actively influence goals and working conditions.

C. PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

Pre-school education is currently undergoing a process of radical change in Sweden. In 1975 the legal right to a pre-school education was established for all 6-year-olds. Responsibility for pre-school programmes rests with the municipal authorities. The organisational structure comprises full-day-care pre-schools and part-time pre-schools. In addition to the regular pre-school activities, a number of pilot projects for open pre-schools have been launched. These are open to all parents and pre-school-age children who are not in pre-school.

Full-day-care centres take children from 6 months of age while part-time pre-schools cater mainly for 6-year olds plus those 4- and 5-year olds who need special help and stimulation. Children who for physical, psychological, social, language, or other reasons need special support in their development should as far as possible be provided with a place in the pre-schools before the age of six. The municipal authorities are legally required to take active steps to seek out these children. The municipal authorities can also organise pre-school in the form of family day-care arrangements where mothers with their own children take children whose parents both go out to work in order to foster their development.

This legislation is a step towards a social and family policy reform programme. It places greater active and conscious responsibility on the municipal authorities who are legally responsible for developing plans for the expansion of the pre-school welfare and education programmes as well as for actively seeking contact with families who might need special support.

Despite considerable economic investment, pre-schools have not been built quickly enough to meet the demand for day-care. This situation is one of the most serious problems of social and family policy today.

In 1974/75 the number of children of pre-school age stood at 782,000; 53 per cent of these children had mothers who went out to work. At the same time the number of available pre-school places was about 200,000. Only one third of the available places were intended as full-day-care. The present government has pledged that it will provide 100,000 new full-day-care places within the next 5 years. But it is already questionable whether they can fulfil this promise in the present economic situation.

At present charges are made for attendance at a day care centre. Depending upon the family's income and number of children, the cost to the parents varies between 3 and 29 Sw.Kr. per day and child.

Given the wide disparity between available places and the number of children of pre-school age, it is likely that the quantitative aspect will, for a long time, occupy a central position in the socio-political debate.

As an example of the relationship between the supply of and demand for places, I will describe the situation in Gothenburg county on 31st December, 1976:

Number of children below 7 years of age, approximately	35,000
Number of children in part-time pre-school (mainly 6-year-olds)	7,038
Number of children on waiting list for part-time pre-school (mainly 4- and 5-year olds)	4,347
Number of full-day-care places	4,589
Number of places in family day care	1,665
Number of children on waiting list for full-day-care	7,718

The figures reveal that the number of full-day-care places would need to be tripled to cover the applications from families with children. For the socio-political reform programme to reach all families with children the number of available full-day-care places would have to be quadrupled.

From the standpoint of the individual child's intellectual and social development, it is important that society build up and make available education and welfare at the pre-school level. The "normal" family environment for upbringing today comprises at most one other child. The family as a unit for upbringing therefore offers a limited environment for social experience. At pre-school, especially in mixed age groups, children are offered a richer spectrum of social experience.

Pre-school is, today, the institution at which children can learn, in a natural fashion, how to get along with other children and adults with a different background of language, intellect and values. About 60,000 of children of pre-school age in Sweden are children of immigrant parents. For them and for all other children pre-school offers an environment for learning and experience which is fundamental to their later intellectual and social development.

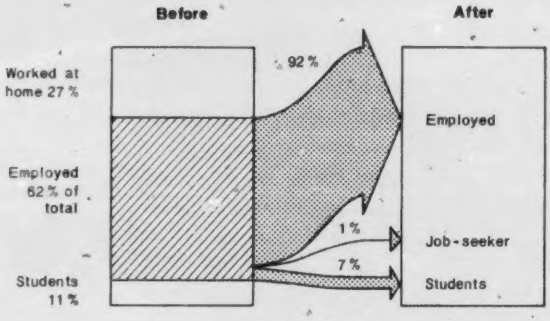
But the expansion of day care and the placing of a child at a day-care centre is also important to achieve sexual equality and has consequences for labour market policies.

In Gothenburg a study has been made of the effects on the labour market of granting children a full-day-care place. The statistics are based on a survey of approximately 500 families who were offered full-day-care in 1972. The survey was answered by 97 per cent of those questioned.

The result showed that 62 per cent were already employed, 27 per cent worked at home and 11 per cent were students. Of those who were already employed the majority continued to work, while 7 per cent began to study after the child was given a full-day-care place. (See figure below).

Figure 1

THE IMPACT OF FULL-DAY-CARE FACILITIES ON THOSE ALREADY IN EMPLOYMENT



There were also quantitative changes in the pattern of employment; about 40 per cent increased their working hours and consequently their income.

Of those already studying, half changed to employment.

Of those working at home 69 per cent had taken up employment within fourteen days, 9 per cent had become job-seekers and 22 per cent had taken up studies. (See figure below.)

The survey also shows that 96 per cent of those who had custody of the children were women. It is women who are affected by lack of day care.

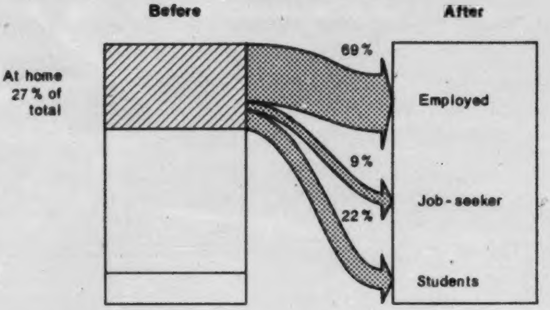
The results make clear that society's supply of full-day-care facilities is directly related to the available supply of manpower. The "leisure time" afforded women by access to full-day-care is invested in productive work and study.

The results show conclusively that equality between men and women in professional careers and personal development is dependent upon society's expansion of its pre-school programme.

With the current lack of full-day-care places, there is a risk that the qualitative aspects of the pre-school programme will recede

Figure 2

THE IMPACT OF FULL-DAY-CARE FACILITIES ON THOSE WORKING AT HOME



into the background. At present extensive educational reform is being undertaken with regard to pre-school organisation.

This reform of the pre-school system may be resumed by the expression "educational dialogue". The central idea is that children and parents become participants in the process of development. Children's personalities are not to be formed from above or from the outside by authoritarian methods but in co-operation with children and parents.

The teacher's role as a specialist - the one who always knows best and most about children, development and methods of upbringing - is thus changed. The specialist role gives way to that of co-actor. The teacher must actively "tune in" to the children's and the families' situations in order to create a context of shared responsibility for the social development of the child. The guidelines include the principle that the pre-school staff work as a team with a constant overlap on each other's role, and with a continual exchange of working functions.

The children are to be placed in "sibling groups" which means mixed-age groups, in order to achieve a family-like environment for upbringing and development. In such a situation the children learn from each other as well as from the staff.

Activities under the pre-school programmes build on the active participation of the parents through regular home visits and parent meetings. To make pre-school visits possible parents have, since 1977, had a legal right to paid absence from work for pre-school visits one whole or two half-days per year.

One of the main ideas behind the reform programme is parental education through the pre-school organisation. The pre-school as an institution has good opportunities for reaching all families with children. The parents can be reached early on, that is when developmental problems and methods of upbringing are still being worked out.

Since the pre-school programme welcomes active parental participation in the children's everyday play and activity, the parents can learn directly what social, emotional, and intellectual problems arise in each phase of the child's development. Through discussions with other parents and the staff they can learn to overcome problems and stimulate their children to all-round development. By giving specialists within preventive medicine, medical care, and other social services a more regular opportunity for participation with the pre-school - functionally or locationally - new possibilities are opened up for an integrated and unified family education.

D. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The major responsibility for children with special needs has devolved on the county councils. This has often meant that the council has taken responsibility for the handicapped child's pre-school education. As a result municipal authorities and county councils have often developed parallel social and educational programmes.

In response to a proposal in December 1976 by the Child Care Group, a government commission, it is now being recommended that handicapped children be integrated as far as possible into the municipal pre-school programmes.

Thus the municipalities will have the main responsibility for pre-school education. The institutional programmes run by the county councils will be split up and their welfare and rehabilitative functions taken over by the regular open pre-school.

The proposal is, with very few exceptions, supported by all the bodies to which it has been submitted for consideration.

Under the proposal the central responsibility for supervision lies entirely with the National Board of Health and Welfare (a responsibility previously shared with the National Board of Education) in order to denote more clearly the social role of the pre-school system as well as to facilitate co-ordination between the caretaking and rehabilitative activities.

The proposal implies a major change in educational and medical health policy. The entire basis for having separate organisations in mental health education and social welfare within the span of early childhood is being called into question.

When this proposal is implemented, it will lead to a more complex reality for both normal and handicapped children as well as for the adults who participate in their social and intellectual development. But it also holds the potential for change and development not only in child-care plans within pre-school education but also for the children's and adults' conception of reality.

The proposal also implies a decentralisation of rehabilitative activities. Yet it seems clear that this particular function, from both an economic and therapeutic standpoint, is most efficiently conducted centrally by a team of specialists.

To send specialists into the "field" naturally raises problems of an organisational, economic, and therapeutic nature. The approach taken in the proposal implies that priority be given to social factors - the child's foothold on reality, his need for his family, and his chances for a normal developmental environment rather than to therapeutic and organisational determinants.

The proposed co-ordination of the medical health and educational sectors for handicapped children may be seen as one of the most important expressions of the integration of social welfare and educational functions.

The concepts of care and education have often seemed to reflect conflicting aims within the frame of social commitment. The concept of care has sometimes been made to denote a passive function, detached from reality, as opposed to the active, developmental function of education. In other contexts the concept of education represents a narrow-minded specialised activity in contrast to the comprehensive developmental picture of care. This contradictory relationship is in the process of being resolved. There is no care which has no educational effect, and no real education without some basic element of care.

The proposed integration abolishes institutionalised care and replaces it with a common experience of reality for both handicapped and normal children. This co-ordination questions the very basis of what is considered as "normal" and provides efficient and appropriate methods of fostering the child's social and intellectual development.

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III

WOMEN, CHILDREN AND CHILD-CARE CENTRES

by

Elly Singer

A. INTRODUCTION

The issues raised by the CERI Project on Early Childhood are based, inter alia, on recent developments in the education of young children in OECD Member countries. Some of the more important of these are that:

- an ever-increasing number of children receive part of their education outside the family;
- day-care centres and the like are generally set up to meet the needs of working mothers;
- the various institutions dealing with young children - family, health-care centres, day-care centres, kindergartens - often work in isolation; they confine themselves to their own specific educational tasks and are either unaware of or uninterested in each other's work;
- children's needs are lost sight of, as well as their overall development.

One of the most important aims of the CERI Project is to identify the forces tending to segment, disintegrate and depersonalise education and to support efforts to counter them. This Project takes as its starting point children's needs rather than those of adults.

My contribution was to describe experiences with integrating and co-ordinating the action of the various authorities responsible for the education of young children in the Netherlands. Reflecting on how to plan my contribution, I soon encountered two difficulties:

- developments in the Netherlands differ in many respects from those in other OECD countries.
- I found it difficult to set the needs of children against those of adults. In my opinion standing up for what children need in general is not a realistic starting point and besides, may prove strategically wrong. The educational problem can

only be solved in the context of social relations that try to respond to the needs of all involved.

In the light of the foregoing I shall devote relatively more attention to describing the Dutch situation and its specific problems. I would particularly like to pay attention to those aspects of developments that differ substantially from those in other OECD countries and to women's needs as expressed by the women's emancipation movement. In my description of the Dutch situation I shall confine myself primarily to the education of children up to the age of four. In the Netherlands there are wide differences in the education of children below and above this age.

Kindergartens, institutions for children between 4 and 7 years of age, share many of the characteristics of the official education system: the same opening times, a time-table and comparatively large groups (about 30 pupils per group). Kindergartens are highly institutionalised and professional in their approach: they are controlled and wholly subsidised by the government, with supervisors, official training colleges for teachers, special learning and developmental materials for the age group involved, a low degree of parental participation; and there is a gap between education at home and in the neighbourhood on the one hand and education at school on the other(1). About 95 per cent of Dutch children between 4 and 7 attend kindergartens. Unlike kindergartens, child-care centres for children under 4 have little in common with the official education system; they have a low degree of institutionalisation and professionalisation. About 25 per cent of children between 2 and 4 attend child-care centres. The differences between kindergartens and child-care centres are so substantial that simultaneous discussion within the framework of this contribution is hardly possible.

Kindergartens will only be discussed in Section G, in connection with relations between processes of institutionalisation and possible causes of "over-institutionalisation". Problems connected with the high degree of institutionalisation will be analysed so that child-care centres may learn from them. Finally, I shall try to provide evidence to substantiate my contention that intensive co-operation between the men and women active in child-care centres and women from emancipation movements gives the best guarantee against the over-institutionalisation of child-care centres.

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1) One could say that an education system with these characteristics tends to become "over-institutionalised". This concept will be used (as a reverse of the concept "de-schooling") to indicate the process of segmentation, disintegration and isolation of institutionalised education systems.

B. CHILD-CARE CENTRES IN THE NETHERLANDS

1. Rapid growth in the number of child-care centres(1)

In the past few years the number of child-care centres in Holland has risen rapidly from some 180 in 1969 to approximately 2,500 in 1975. These child-care centres are mainly used by children between the ages of 2 and 4 years. Children younger than 2 are the exception, about 5 per cent of the total group. (Van Rijswijk-Clerkx, 1975; Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work, 1976). Of all children in Holland between the ages of 2 and 4, 25 per cent (105,000) attended a child-care centre.

Up to now the growth in the number of child-care centres has been the result of people's efforts on the local level: national policy has had little influence. It was not until 1975 that child-care centres were included in the government budget. The "Act on child-care centres" was first drafted in 1973. These action-based initiatives have resulted in great differences between child-care centres in many respects; a proper survey of the situation in the country as a whole has yet to be made. The only data known refer to opening times, children's age, group size, etc. A survey on operationally more complex differences, such as aims, management, contact with parents and institutions in the field of education of young children has never truly been made. How can we explain the increase in the number of child-care centres? What kind of people were the initiators? For what reasons do parents bring their children to a child-care centre?(2)

2. The initiators

The history of child-care centres has yet to be written. The following has been based mainly on the first survey findings of the so-called Krèche-Project, (van Rijswijk-Clerkx, 1977).

Day - nursery associations

The oldest form for the institutional care of children is the day-nursery. Day-nurseries were first set up in the last century by well-to-do ladies for reasons of charity. They were meant for children of the poor, widows, unmarried mothers and in general all deprived children. The day-nurseries were, and sometimes still are, run by associations which discouraged parental interference in their management.

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1) By "child-care centres" I refer to all forms of institutional ways of taking care of children.
2) Unfortunately the analysis in this paper is limited to motives of initiators and parents. Socio-economic studies in the field of child-care in Holland are still not available.

From 1965 onwards a growing need for child-care of a different character became felt: mothers of children from "normal" families began to apply, because they wanted to take a job outside the home. Some associations have responded by opening new day nurseries to meet this need, though demand still outstrips supply. At the moment nearly all big cities have waiting lists. In general, priority is given to children whose development is threatened: children from broken homes, problem families or families with language difficulties; children who have a slight physical or mental handicap. This has meant that children of mothers who are considered to have no economic need to work stand a low chance of being accepted. Because of this, commercial crèches and crèches attached to factories have been set up in Holland in the past few years. According to a national estimate 43 per cent of the parents of children in day nurseries come from the lower classes, 40 per cent from the middle classes and 17 per cent from the higher classes (COBA, 1974), though, for example, in a university town like Groningen most parents belong to the middle- and higher-educated classes (van der Zee, 1976).

In 1975 the number of day nurseries in Holland was 162, that is, about 8 per cent of all child-care centres (Ministry of Culture, 1976).

Club and community centres

Another group of child-care centres was started within the framework of club and community centres about 1955. At first these were planned purely as a service to the family: relieving mothers of large families for a few hours. Some community centres in socially deprived neighbourhoods were subsidised by the government for this kind of work.

Since 1970 two important changes have taken place in this field. The number of child-care centres has increased, and running day nurseries or play groups has become a normal part of the work of the community centres. The importance of child-care centres for the development of children is increasingly being recognised. In various community centres people are trying to achieve an integration of the work with 2- and 3-year-olds and their parents under a neighbourhood approach. The new activities on the part of child-care centres, such as parental participation and compensatory activities for children from impoverished backgrounds have proved to be compatible with the traditional activities of the club and community centres. However, there are great differences between centres as not all develop at the same rate. In 1975, 21 per cent of child-care centres were attached to club and community centres (Ministry of Culture, 1976).

Education

Nursery schools, or the so-called 3-year-old classes attached to kindergartens since 1958, are only found in the field of private education(1). One of the main characteristics of these nursery schools is that the groups are larger than in the other child-care centres and work on a more school-like basis. Around 1970 these too began to increase in number and in 1975 constituted about 5 per cent of all child-care centres (Ministry of Culture, 1976).

The Association of Women with an Academic Education

The increase in the number of child-care centres may to a great extent be attributed to the work of some Arnhem members of the Association of Women with an Academic Education (hereafter referred to as VVAO). About 1967 these women were doing research on the situation of mothers with young children. They wondered what the importance of a crèche would be for both mother and child. With this in mind they visited several child-care centres and in 1968 started setting up what they termed play groups.

These VVAO play groups operate as follows: they are open 3 hours each morning, from 9.00 to 12.00; children between the ages of 2 and 4 come two or three mornings a week. The play groups are managed by the parents. The group is run by a qualified worker(2), usually assisted by students, mothers who volunteer to help, and experts, such as a doctor, a psychologist, an educational expert. The play groups are partially subsidised by the municipality. The main aim is the development of the child. The VVAO play groups have become very famous in Holland. People from all parts of the country came to visit them, and within a few years hundreds of such play groups were set up. The Commission of VVAO play groups quickly developed into a national information centre. The Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work (the full Dutch name) was asked by the Commission to recognise and take on responsibility for organising and subsidising all forms of child-care centres. In 1970 the VVAO Commission and the already existing Central Society of Day Nurseries were merged. A national umbrella organisation was formed, the Working Unit of Child-care Centres in Holland (hereafter referred to as WKN), which since then has concerned itself with the interests of all child-care centres. Most of the latter are play groups inspired by the VVAO play groups (about 60 per cent).

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1) As of 1958 3-year-olds may not enter government-subsidised kindergarten classes.

2) This "worker's" function is a mixture of care-giving nursing and teaching. In Dutch the feminine word "leidster" is preferred. (Kohnstamm and Wagenaar Hardon, 1975).

Experiments

Finally mention should be made of special child-care centres which, though not great in number, have had considerable influence on educational ideas. These are the so-called anti-authoritarian crèches and child-care centres subsidised by the government, where experiments were carried out by experts with forms of parental participation and programmes to stimulate 2- and 3-year-olds. (Kohnstamm, 1976 and Buelen and Wijnen, 1974).

C. PARENTS AND CHILD-CARE CENTRES

1. Working mothers

In England, Germany and France one of the main reasons for the existence of child-care centres seems to be the fact that the mother has a job outside the home (CERI, 1976). This led us to ask whether the growth of the number of child-care centres in Holland is due to the growing number of working women with small children. It was established that in the period between 1960 and 1970 relatively more mothers with young children took a job, although proportionately fewer than in other western European countries (Meyer, 1977).

Table 1

MARRIED WOMEN BELOW THE AGE OF 50 WITH OR WITHOUT A PROFESSION, BASED ON FAMILY SITUATIONS IN HOLLAND BETWEEN MARCH AND MAY 1973

(percentages)

	With children under the age of 6 x = 1000	Total group x = 2140
Job as main occupation	7	16
Job as secondary occupation	8	10
No job	85	75
	100	100

Source: C.B.S. Labour Force census, 1973.

Fifteen per cent of married women below the age of 50 with children under 6 have a job outside the home. Table 2 shows the situation in other countries.

Conclusion: in Holland a much lower percentage of women with small children work outside the home than in other comparable countries. In Holland there is not such an obvious link between the rapid growth in the number of child-care centres and the number of mothers working outside the home as in other countries.

Table 2

PERCENTAGE OF YOUNG MARRIED WOMEN IN THE TOTAL FEMALE LABOUR FORCE

Australia	1971	35.2
Austria	1971	56.2
Canada	1972	56.9
Denmark	1973	65.0
Germany	1975	39.1
Japan	1973	47.5
Sweden	1975	66.2
U.S.A.	1973	42.23
France	1968	55.3

Source: Alice H. Cook: The Working Mother; La Femme Danoise, Women in the Labour Force and Figures, 1973, published by the Women's Bureau of Labour, Canada.

Another way to establish to what extent the growth in the number of child-care centres is related to the growth in the number of mothers taking up a job is to examine whether child-care centres provide an adequate answer to the needs of working mothers. To this end Lily van Rijswijk-Clerkx (1975) has drawn a distinction between mother-oriented and non-mother-oriented child-care centres on the basis of opening times. Mother-oriented child-care centres are for instance the day nurseries and crèches attached to industries, open part-time or all day. Non-mother-oriented child-care centres are play groups and nursery schools which are open only a few hours a day and sometimes only a few days a week. The relative increase in both categories is shown in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3

MOTHER-ORIENTED CHILD-CARE CENTRES IN 1969 AND 1975

	1969	1975
Child-care centres, open all day, all week	58	152
Child-care centres, open half day, all week	7	14
Total	65	166

Sources: Jansen and van Rijswijk-Clerkx, 1975, and Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work, 1976.

From these tables it will be noted that the main increase is in child-care centres which give the mother insufficient "time off" to take up a (part-time) job.

In 1974 a representative national survey (the "Social Participation of Women") was held among 927 women with at least one child

Table 4

NON-MOTHER-ORIENTED CHILD-CARE CENTRES IN 1969 AND 1975

	1969	1975
Play groups: open a few hours, a few days a week	57	2290
Nursery schools: open normal school hours	59	58
Total	116	2348

Sources: Jansen and van Rijswijk-Clerkx, 1975,and Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work, 1976.

still at home (Zeldenrust-Noordanus, 1974). A small correlation was found between the use of a child-care centre and the mother having a job: 16 per cent of the working mothers made use of a child-care centre, versus 11 per cent of the non-working mothers. Of these 16 per cent, only 36 per cent gave the opportunity to go out to work as a reason for their use of a child-care centre. Asked what solution they would envisage were they to take up a job, 26 per cent of the non-working mothers gave as their preference a child-care centre, 38 per cent a baby-sitter, and 19 per cent a home-help(1).

On the basis of the above the fact that women take up a job outside the home would seem to have played a significantly less important role in the setting up of child-care centres than it has played in neighbouring countries.

2. Parental motives

In the past few years some research on the local level has been made into why parents bring their children to child-care centres (Geijsel, 1973; Goede-Kunst, 1975; van Rijswijk-Clerkx, 1974; van Doorne-Huiskes, 1971). In most of these studies a distinction is drawn between child-oriented and parent-oriented motives. Among the former the following are frequently cited:

- the child can play with other children, which is beneficial for his/her social development;
- there are more possibilities for play than at home: the child can play without the constraints of traffic, lack of space, and there is no risk of bothering the neighbours or damaging the furniture;
- the child-care centre offers a solution for problems of both parents and children; parents having problems with their child's upbringing are temporarily relieved, which can allow

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1) Child-minding families are relatively unknown in the Netherlands.

them to see their situation differently. Moreover, the child-care centre can, to an important extent, help the child whose development is at risk.

Among the latter, the following motives are cited:

- the mother has more time to herself: she can meet others outside the family, she has time to do her shopping, go to the hairdresser or read a book;
- the child-care centre offers the mother the opportunity to take up a job, be it for financial reasons or for reasons of individual development. If she is not working it provides her with the opportunity for further education.

In analysing the relative importance of child- or parent-directed motives the former are found to preponderate. The following table shows the main reasons given by parents in answer to the question what was the most important reason for making use of a child-care centre.

Table 5

MOST IMPORTANT REASONS FOR MAKING USE OF A CHILD-CARE CENTRE

(percentages)

	Non-working mothers	Working mothers
- the need for the child to meet other children (includes such reasons as "an only child", "the child is too young for kindergarten")	80	65
- the opportunity to work	4	37
- poor housing	12	7
- greater free time	8	5

Source: "Social Participation of Women" survey, M. Zeldenrust-Noordanus, Schiedam 1974.

But in an exploratory survey into deeper parental motives, more than 50 per cent of the mothers who were interviewed named educational problems as a reason for taking their child to a play group. A remarkable fact was that none of these women had a job outside the home, and all of them belonged to the lower social classes (Goede-Kunst, 1975). Child-oriented motives are not important for all mothers. The more dissatisfied a woman is with her position and the higher educated she is, the more important the parent-oriented motives become (van Doorne-Huiskes, 1971).

Our insight into parental motives unfortunately is very limited. Further research is badly needed, especially research into educational problems and the role child-care centres can play in this respect. After all, we must not forget that we are dealing with a continually increasing group of women whose own child is the first she has ever taken care of and raised. The fact that families are tending to become smaller and more isolated as well as the geographical distance and cultural gap which may separate the young mother from her more experienced relatives, result in a situation where the transmission of an educational culture from one generation to the next becomes less self-evident.

It would seem justified to conclude that the mothers' motives are child-directed and that parent-directed motives, based on a change in the traditional task and role pattern between husband and wife, would seem of little significance within the small family unit. We may even wonder whether the play group movement in Holland has not confirmed, rather than questioned, the traditional assumption that motherhood is a woman's primary task(1).

D. WOMEN AND CHILD-CARE CENTRES

In most cases child-care centres allow mothers with young children to devote more time to themselves. In the long run, experience with child-care centres may result in a greater demand for "time off". Is it legitimate to regard the opportunities the child-care centres now offer as a first step towards relieving the Dutch woman of a part of her maternal duties?

Will the number of women working increase and thus bring about a change in the structure of child-care centres? It seems a reasonable assumption that a demand for jobs outside the home will increase (COBA, 1974) in view of the following:

- with the rise in the general educational level of women, there may be a stronger desire to continue working when married;
- women are having children at a younger age, and younger women are generally more inclined to continue working than older ones;
- there is a growing discontent among married women about their isolated position within the family.

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1) The priority accorded to the child and its needs is also reflected at managerial level. A report on the approaches that might be taken in preparing an Act on child-care centres argues against taking the needs of working mothers as a starting point for legislation designed to protect the well-being of the child.

To what extent this demand for work is answered is dependent partly on the labour market situation and partly on women's own active participation in the fight for social services, making work outside the home possible.

As in most western European countries, the economic situation in Holland is unstable. This may lead to an increase in the number of women from lower social classes seeking a job for financial reasons, but, on the other hand, to a decrease in the number of women from middle and higher classes who have no financial need to work. To what extent are Dutch women willing to fight for all-day child-care centres? In the sixties a number of organisations were founded which actively opposed governmental policy in this respect (Oudshoorn, Meulenbelt and Leydesdorff, 1975). These organisations form part of an emancipation movement for women that stresses the importance of work as a way of self-realisation(1). In addition to campaigns for child-care centres they are active on such fronts as equal pay for equal work, equal educational opportunities for women and creating possibilities for part-time work. The majority of the women active in these movements are those with a higher professional education.

In spite of repeated efforts, they have failed to raise interest in these issues among a wider group of women(2). In the early seventies the Dutch emancipation movement received a new impetus (the "third emancipation wave"). In addition to and partly as a reaction against the aforementioned organisations, women's discussion groups(3) were formed(4). These groups usually have female members only. Personal experiences are discussed. Popular topics are: marriage, family, sex, motherhood, housekeeping and women working outside the

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1) In Holland this "Second Emancipation Wave" started around the same period as the play group movement, initiated by the Arnhem members of the VVAO. The most important emancipation groups are "Man Vrouw Maatschappij" (Man-Woman-Society) and Dolle Mina (named after the "Dutch Mrs. Pankhurst"). Dolle Mina grew out of the left wing of Man Vrouw Maatschappij in 1970. Apart from these organisations the "Nederlandse Vrouwenbeweging" of the Dutch communist party has to be mentioned, which was and still is active in the field of child-care centres.

2) Dreson-Coenders (1974) explains this phenomenon by stating that working-class housewives have relatively more interesting, more varied and higher esteemed jobs than their husbands. In this respect she refers to research showing that working-class children in general find their mother to be "more progressive", "smarter" and "more up-to-date" than their father.

3) In English we know no better word for these groups.

4) "MVM" and "DM" are both tightly organised emancipation groups, aimed at political action, which have male members as well. Many women did not feel at home any longer at meetings led by men who, they felt, were more interested in theoretical discussions, than talking about their own personal experience. (Oudshoorn, Meulenbelt and Leydesdorff, 1975).

home. In these groups women try to achieve a positive self-image: they reveal qualities such as being emotional, concrete, spontaneous, caring, tender and having no need to excel or to achieve. They want to free themselves of male standards of, for example, beauty or being attractive, that they have internalised. Men are no longer considered examples for women who want to emancipate themselves. It is obvious that in these groups having a job outside the home is no longer considered to be a necessary condition for female emancipation. The following quotation from a paper on female labour written by a group of women is characteristic of this new view.

> "From various sides married women are put under a considerable amount of pressure to take up a (part-time) job in addition to their housekeeping. We do not readily agree with this. We do if the children can take care of themselves to a substantial degree and the husband helps at home, but even then the available jobs are so boring and monotonous that one is better off finding unpaid but more satisfying work." (In Vrouwenwerk, 1975.)

The influence women's discussion groups have is as yet hard to assess; the movement is still in the process of growing. In various cities "women's houses" are set up, where only women are allowed to enter. Many action-oriented groups have been formed, dealing with essentially female problems such as abortion, rape, violence against women and children, lesbianism, menopause and female therapy. In addition, congresses and seminars are organised for women from various parts of the country. The women's discussion groups, too, were started by women with secondary or university education. Whether or not the women's discussion groups appeal to working-class women remains to be seen.

Having discussed the way the Dutch emancipation movement has developed we return to our starting point: child-care centres. We set out by wondering to what extent women were willing to fight for facilities that could make working outside the home easier. In view of what has been said, we think the likelihood of a large group of women putting in much effort to realise that goal is small.

It is unlikely that the demand for child-care centres will increase in the near future. But we think that in the long run the women's discussion groups can influence the child-care centres: child-care centres may provide an opportunity for women to talk about common problems while the discussion of these problems among women can help to determine the kind of child-care centres needed, from a qualitative as well as from a quantitative point of view. At this moment there is hardly any contact between the two movements. In a history of the Dutch emancipation movement, written by women who publicised the women's discussion groups, the play group movement is not even mentioned (Oudshoorn, Meulenbelt and Leydesdorff, 1975). In the magazine

"De Kleine Wereld", edited by the Working Unit of Child-care Centres in Holland (WKN), the umbrella organisation for child-care centres, female problems are hardly discussed (Meyer, 1977).

At the moment there would seem to be three groups of women in Holland likely to influence developments in the field of child-care centres:

- women for whom child-care centres are a necessary condition for a job outside the home;
- women who by participating in women's discussion groups and related action-oriented groups try to assess the implications of female emancipation; up to now there has been little interest in the phenomenon of child-care centres within this group;
- women active in the play group movement: this group has shown little interest up to now in the problems women have with emancipation.

Although one recognises parent- or mother-oriented motives for taking a child to a child-care centre, the child-care centres are primarily oriented towards the needs of the child. We think intensive contact between these three groups is essential for a soundly based policy for child-care centres. For it seems a reasonable assumption that the play-group movement and the women's discussion group movement in particular are based on comparable needs and feelings of discontent among women.

E. WORKING IN A CHILD-CARE CENTRE

As a rule, child-care centres in Holland are oriented towards the well-being of the child (as has already been established). However, this does not say anything about the way child-care centres try to achieve this goal. We know very little about what is done with the children, how, by whom and why. Unfortunately very little systematic research has up to now been carried out on these questions. We shall, therefore, content ourselves with briefly summarising a few aspects concerning children, parents and qualified workers that we think relevant within the framework of this contribution.

1. Children

The child-care centres up to now have had no clear concept of what can or should be done with children. Most child-care centres are still in an experimental stage. We can gain some idea of what is considered important from publications (Wagenaar, 1977; various issues of De Kleine Wereld, 1974, 1975; Colijn-van der Zee, 1974).

- stimulating motor development;
- stimulating social development and conducting group processes;
- stimulating emotional and creative development, as well as ways of expression;
- stimulating speech and intellectual development, especially in children from so-called socially deprived backgrounds;
- observing and diagnosing developmental problems and disturbances; taking care of problem children and teaching them, in special child-care centres or elsewhere;
- helping the child to discover everyday surroundings, the home, the neighbourhood and the child-care centre (world orientation);
- encouraging independent behaviour in everyday life situations.

Not all child-care centres attach the same importance to these different aspects of education. What is stressed depends on the history of the child-care centre and the institution with which it is associated. In play groups set up by parents more attention is probably paid to motor, social, creative and emotional development as well as to ways of expression.

In child-care centres and play groups associated with club and community centres, work tends to be on a compensatory basis, which means stimulating speech and intellectual development of the so-called socially deprived children. They also emphasize the importance of world orientation and helping the child to become independent in everyday life situations, these aims being closely related to the more general aims of club and community centres. Focusing attention on problem-children or children whose development is at risk is traditionally done in child-care centres sometimes set up for this purpose. Some of them are associated with club and community centres.

Apart from publications dealing with theoretical aspects, a lot is written about more practical matters, such as toys, games, songs, equipment of child-care centres, and appliances for 3 year-olds. The qualified worker especially seems to appreciate such information. Toys, developmental aids, training programmes and methods designed particularly for working with young children in child-care centres as yet scarcely exist. Many child-care centres work with "cast-offs", collected toys and toys made by parents. In this respect it is hardly justified to speak of professionalisation in this field.

2. Parents

In general much stress is laid on the importance of good relations between parents and child-care centres. Parents' involvement in general is substantial, especially in play groups:

- many parents were actively involved with setting up the play group;

- many parents, especially fathers,have helped with equipping the playground, assisted in making and repairing toys, made sandboxes, dolls' corners and the like (in many cases this help is necessitated by the financial situation);
- many play groups are managed by parents;
- many mothers work for little or no remuneration during some part of the day or week;
- many parents actively participate in discussing fusther improvement of "their" play group. (Wagenaar, 1977).

Contact between child-care centres and parents can be important to the child (linking education at home with that received in the child-care centre) as well as to the parents themselves. While the former has been well documented, hardly anything has been written about the latter(1). Hence our reasons for stressing this point. For many mothers child-care centres provide the possibility of coming into contact with other women and being able to talk with others about the problems and uncertainties they experience with the education of their child. The child-care centres also provide a woman with the opportunity of doing something meaningful outside the family and developing her personality by, for instance, working as an assistant, qualified worker or member of the managing committee. Some play groups, especially those associated with club and community centres, explicitly regard coaching and guiding parents as part of their task.

In so-called socially deprived neighbourhoods social workers and qualified workers co-operate closely. Each child-care centre has its own way of contacting the parents. This can be through the parents and teachers association, meetings, obligatory help in the child-care centre during a period in the month or visiting the parents. One of the most important ways of contact is probably the "little chat" when bringing or collecting the child. In some child-care centres this is encouraged by serving coffee to the parents. The fact that many child-care centres are still in their early stages facilitates this process. It remains to be seen whether the parents' involvement will continue when the child-care centres become well-run and without financial problems.

3. Workers and coaches

In 1975 a national survey showed that nearly a quarter (23 per cent) of the workers in child-care centres were volunteers. There

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1) In the report "Starting points for alternative legislation on child-care centres" by the WKN, much attention is paid to parental participation and the influence parents can have on the work in child-care centres. But the deeper reasoning is based only on the interests and needs of the children, whereas possible interests and needs of the parents themselves are hardly, if at all, mentioned.

also appeared to be a great variety in the training that the workers (volunteers included) had received. A large proportion had never had any training for working with children. This variety in training is due to the fact that in the Netherlands there is no specific training for working in child-care centres. The pedagogical coaching of workers in child-care centres shows a similar picture. Volunteers have backgrounds ranging from medicine to education. The WKN, the national umbrella organisation, has always devoted much attention to the professionalisation of both workers and coaches. On the initiative of the WKN a number of discussion papers on the future training of workers were produced. In addition the WKN has organised in-service training courses for workers and coaches. The worker profession, however, is still at a developmental stage. There are as many conceptions of a worker's job as there are kinds of child-care centres.

There are three reasons why it is desirable to arrive at a clearer definition of the tasks of a worker and of the kind of training required. The first relates to the quality of the work in child-care centres. A clear description of tasks gives a new worker a better grip on her job: she does not have to work out the meaning of her job totally by herself. Knowledge of the demands that are made upon a worker enables governing boards of child-care centres to use criteria to judge whether a worker will be a likely person for the job. The second reason relates to workers' wages. In general wages are very low and even insufficient to live on (Ahlers, 1975)(1). Demands for higher rates can better be justified if there is a task description and greater clarity about the required level of training. The low wage level is one of the factors explaining the short stay of workers in a job. On the average they remain only a couple of years. Volunteers usually only work in the centre during the period their child is attending it. The short stay of workers results in very little accumulation of knowledge and experience. Experienced workers are scarce. The third reason is that more clarity is required in connection with the future child-care centre Act. The government may decide only to subsidise the centres if certain quality guarantees can be provided, such as standards for workers and coaches.

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1) Workers in day-care centres usually receive the minimum (youth) wage. Workers in other centres are generally paid even less. Because of the unfavourable regulations the workers are often paid only for the hours children are present (around 3 hours a day). Other activities like visits to parents, organising meetings with parents or with other workers, are unpaid. (De Kleine Wereld, 1976, No. 66).

F. GOVERNMENT POLICY ON CHILD-CARE CENTRES

1. Lack of policy and legislation

The policy of the Dutch authorities on child-care centres is characterised by ad hoc measures and the absence of a long-term approach. There is a draft for a child-care centres' Act which was drawn up by the Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work in 1973. Many of those involved in early childhood education have commented upon this draft (De Kleine Wereld, 1974, No.33). According to a rough estimate by the WKN, workers in child-care centres alone have spent over 3,000 hours of work in giving their reactions to this text! From the comments there would appear to be no wide differences in ideas about child-care centres. Nevertheless, the Ministry did not take any further steps towards a new Act.

In 1975 child-care centres were for the first time allocated a budget. In spite of the WKN's initial demand that the same subsidy regulations should apply to all child-care centres, there is a distinction in the budget between day-care centres and play groups. The day-care centres came under the Maatschappelijke Dienstverlening (Social Services) and are almost completely subsidised. The play groups came under the Sociaal-Cultureel Werk (Social-Cultural Services) within the framework of the "Interim Rijksbijdrage regeling vrijwilligers jeugd- en jongerenwerk", (a subsidy regulation for volunteers in the field of youth work); in 1976 subsidies did not exceed F 2,500 per play group. This distinction will have an adverse effect on the future development of child-care centres. Day-care centres may be labelled (or continue to be labelled) as institutions for children taken into care for social or medical motives. A strict distinction does not allow flexibility in local adjustments to the need of child-care centres. For instance, how should a day-care centre which has full day-care facilities as well as facilities for groups 2 or 3 mornings a week be subsidised?

Furthermore, inequality of rights between workers in day-care centres and those in play groups cannot be justified. In order to give the same wages to workers in play groups and day-care centres the amounts contributed by parents must be increased substantially. However, such an increase makes it impossible for parents from the lowest income categories to pay for a play group. Another solution - working with volunteers or under-paid workers only - may have a negative effect on the quality and continuity of the work. (De Kleine Wereld, 1977, No.68.) Government money is supplied via the municipal authorities. This has one advantage: policy decentralisation makes it possible to respond to local demands. Decentralisation without a clear policy or legislation may too prove to be disadvantageous. Child-care centres have to rely on municipal authorities. In every municipality child-care centres have to fight their own battle for subsidies(1). Other problems resulting from this type of decentralisation concern in-service training as well as training and the coaching of workers. Only the larger towns and cities will have their own provisions and facilities. Smaller towns and villages will have to rely on the co-operation given by regional or provincial authorities. A clear governmental policy is of paramount importance in the future development of child-care centres.

2. Long-term policy and legislation imply institutionalisation

For a long time there has been pressure from many quarters calling for statutory regulations on child-care centres and a clear government policy. Both are considered essential conditions for controlling child-care centre standards. It is no easy task to formulate standards for child-care centres. Little is known about the requirements that must be met if one is to guarantee the optimal development of children. A few years ago the "Werkgemeenschap Kindercentra in Nederland" issued a paper on the housing and equipment of child-care centres. This paper was distributed throughout the country and comments were solicited. As a result we now have directives on such matters as safety, hygiene, furniture and the kind of in- and outside space required. However, there is still no agreement on such matters as: minimum age, opening hours, group size, role of parents, child-care centre structure and relations with other institutions (Wagenaar, 1977). It is even doubtful if agreement will ever be reached on these matters and whether complete control is desirable. Strict rules lead to uniformity and make it impossible to respond to requirements at the local level. When evaluating statutory regulations and government policy much attention will have to be devoted to what can be done about the possible adverse effects of further institutionalising child-care centres(2).

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1) In January 1977 the Ministry published a proposal to exclude play groups from the budget. The Ministry wants to set aside a certain amount of money for socio-cultural activities on the part of municipalities. Municipalities may claim this money by presenting a four-year plan. Child-care centres will then have to decide jointly with organisations for youth and educational work and local clubs how to share out the money. In the present situation the partners in the discussion are unequal and conflict is almost always unavoidable. (De Kleine Wereld, 1976, No.66).

2) Fears of this kind are reflected in the reactions to an earlier proposal of the Ministry of Education to lower the entrance age of kindergartens to 3 years. Lowering the entrance age could go a long way to solve the subsidy problems of institutions for children under 4. For those involved, however, the disadvantages of the present kindergartens were too great to see them as a suitable educational environment for 3-year-olds. They thought the present kindergartens too strictly regulated or over-institutionalised for young children (Ahlers, 1975; Project SVO-0201, 1974).

G. OVER-INSTITUTIONALISATION: A NECESSARY BY-PRODUCT OF INSTITUTIONALISATION?

1. The example of kindergartens

From previous paragraphs we have learned that the Dutch situation in regard to child-care centres is characterised by:

- a large degree of child-centeredness;
- a high degree of parental involvement;
- a variety of forms of child-care centres; this is explained mainly by their origin (often the result of action-based initiatives), their low level of professionalisation, and a lack of statutory regulations and of government policy.

At first sight the problem stated by the CERI Project on Early Childhood hardly seems relevant to the Dutch situation: "To trace and to support efforts in order to stop educational developments in the direction of segmentation, disintegration and isolation" is a rather peculiar objective in a situation in which developments like these are virtually non-existent(1). Nevertheless, there is no call for rejoicing. After all, in the Netherlands we have an educational system for 4-6-year-olds (the so-called kindergartens) with many characteristics of an "over-institutionalised" system. For instance, in the kindergartens a gap does exist between family education and education in the kindergarten. Unlike child-care centres, kindergartens have a high degree of professionalisation and institutionalisation (see Introduction). This may go to explain the difference in extent of over-institutionalisation. The professionalisation and institutionalisation of child-care centres currently under way could lead to over-institutionalisation in this field as well.

In the past few years there have been many experiments in kindergartens to stimulate parent participation, *inter alia*, as a way of integrating education in the family, the neighbourhood and the kindergarten. In these experiments all sorts of difficulties were encountered. In my opinion it is very important that in the field of child-care centres proper attention be given to these problems. After all, it is better to prevent than to cure(2). In the literature concerning these experiments (Peters, 1974) the following -

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1) Actually, this applies to play groups only. In day-care centres the situation is often different. That is why these paragraphs mainly apply to play groups.

2) In child-care centres many hold the optimistic view that parent participation in child-care centres will have a positive influence on parent participation in kindergartens. Possible influences of kindergartens on child-care centres should not be underestimated, however: many workers in child-care centres were trained to be kindergarten teachers; the present kindergarten system provides the clearest available example of working with children outside the family; some child-care centres are associated with kindergartens.

interdependent - factors are mentioned which hinder parent participation:

a) as regards the parents:

- In the schools parents encounter very little interest in their everyday problems regarding their work, the family, or the neighbourhood. The education system is too school-oriented. It is assumed that parents are very interested in the school, rather than vice-versa.
- Parents from socially lower classes often feel discriminated against and do not always have confidence in co-operation with parents from socially higher classes; in group discussions they often have difficulty in expressing their views.
- Parents from socially lower classes are often suspicious of the school because of negative experiences in their youth (Peters, 1974).

b) as regards the content:

- The educational content as it exists in most schools seems to represent quite a different world from the one parents and children know and are used to; there is no link with what parents and children experience in everyday life. To many parents, the background and meaning of training programmes and of developmental materials is not clear. Besides, the use of such educational means demands a special expertise parents do not possess. Furthermore, the growing industry of learning materials results in the fact that there are many objects in kindergartens that are unlikely to be seen in any other situation (Brands, 1974; van de Hoven, 1974; Janssen-Vos and Singer, 1976).

c) as regards the teachers:

- Most of the teachers have (lower) middle-class backgrounds. This causes communication problems with parents and children from the working and higher classes, (differences in use of language, word-meanings, in habits, values and norms) (Peters, 1974).
- Many teachers have to cope with an "expert syndrome". We mean by this that teachers are afraid to show the limits of their own expertise, or know-how. Thus they tend to compensate by attaching over-importance to their position and showing off their knowledge. (Dresen-Coenders, 1974; Janssen-Vos, 1977).
- Many teachers have a remarkable fear of asking adults about certain personal data. For example, it is often

thought to be very indiscreet to ask parents about their education and professions (privacy syndrome).

- During their training, teachers are not prepared for contacts with parents.
- Teachers have often gained little social experience outside the protected environment of their training school and the kindergarten where they work (CBS Bulletin 7631, 1975).

What can we learn from these kindergarten experiences and how can this knowledge be applied to child-care centres?

2. Proposals to prevent over-institutionalisation of child-care centres

On the basis of an analysis of the actual situation in child-care centres and experience gained in attempting to integrate school and family (and neighbourhood), I would like to formulate a number of suggestions which I think are important if child-care centres are not to become over-institutionalised. I shall deal successively with what in my view are required developments concerning educational content, the training of (future) workers, contacts with parents and government policy.

Working with young children: the educational content

In child-care centres no traditions have yet been established with respect to working with children. It is scarcely possible to speak of special training programmes, methods and materials for young children. Many workers appear to be very much in want of information about what can be done with children in child-care centres. The future of child-care centres will be greatly influenced by the way this lack of information is met, and what kind of information, methods, materials, etc. will become available. In order to prevent child-care centres on the one hand and family and neighbourhood on the other from drifting apart, the content should correspond as closely as possible with what the children experience at home and in their neighbourhoods. This means using a minimum number of working methods, programmes and materials which are unfamiliar to the family and the neighbourhood. Instead of developmental materials and expensive toys, use should be made of objects with which children can also play at home, such as pans, cutlery, tin-openers, armchairs, mattresses, spiral springs, tables, boxes, clothes, water taps and traditional toys like cars, dolls, bicycles, sand-boxes, paint, paper, clay, etc.

In the child-care centre, a worker can help children to explore their everyday life situation. She can also help children to become more independent by making them do things by themselves, such as buttering and slicing bread, clearing things up, watering plants, operating the radio and tape-recorder. In addition, trips to surrounding areas offer a great variety of opportunities for adventures and discoveries. This way of working presupposes a kind of expertise which is different from that normally required for kindergartens. Working with a scientifically developed training programme requires familiarity with the manual and expertise in applying it in the right situations.

Working from everyday experiences of children, however, demands that a worker regard the children's environment as a learning situation; a worker should be able to re-discover the surroundings together with the children. The difficulty in this way of working is in doing it systematically; all children's needs and interests should be met and possible problems should be noticed in time. The keeping of a diary is one way of tackling this problem(1). This method cannot be implemented by means of manuals or books describing programmes developed by experts. By means of examples, the basic principles of this working method can be transferred in a way that workers can apply these in their own working situation. The most important role of the experts, therefore, consists of the development of strategies to make the principles transferable (Singer, 1977; Kohnstamm Instituut, 1976).

The requirements of a training system for teachers

On the matter of training I shall confine myself to suggestions for creating conditions for good contacts with parents and the neighbourhood and for adjusting child-care centres to what the parents need. In my opinion starting points for a training system should be: practical experience in child-care centres and social experience in general. I think this can best be realised within the framework of a training system with the following characteristics:

- Entrance qualifications such as secondary or higher schooling should not be obligatory (lower secondary MAVO, upper secondary HAVO, pre-university education VWO). Raising entry requirements will mean that it is mainly men and women from the middle and higher social classes who will have the opportunity to become workers.
- In addition to day-courses, evening or part-time courses should also be established. Only those already working in child-care centres at the start of the course should be allowed to attend part-time courses. Part-time courses are important so as to offer an opportunity for training to women

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1) Descriptions of this way of working with children can be found in articles by Marijke Rutten (1977), Mieke Donkersloot (1977b) and Wil Baars (1977).

with children and older people. Facilities like these are important when it comes to establishing a variety of social experiences in child-care centre management by bringing in people from different age groups and with different backgrounds.

- The training should constitute a starting point for working in child-care centres. I think a day-course of about 3 years would be sufficient. In addition to the initial training, a system of in-service training courses will have to be set up providing training opportunities for the various positions in child-care centres, bearing in mind the differences in these centres as regards objectives, teaching methods and allocation of tasks (worker, head worker, coaching staff or parents).
- In both initial and in-service training, ample attention should be given to team work and co-operation with parents, social workers, school guidance services and the like (Würdeman, 1975; Kleerekoper and Schukken, 1976).

Contacts with parents

The way relations with parents are maintained will be different in each child-care centre. A permanent process of experimentation will be required to respond and adjust to the evolving needs of workers and parents. I will not go further into this. I only want to point out that a too child-centered approach in contacts with the parents may have adverse effects in the long run. Children are important but are not everything in the lives of their parents. If parents are expected to take an interest in child-care centre activities then their own needs should be catered to as well. Providing an opportunity for mothers to get together in child-care centres should not automatically mean that they have to talk about their children. Ideas such as obligatory parent participation - e.g. assisting in centres for a particular period of time - or coaching parents in educating their children can in my opinion also be dangerous. If the education of her child becomes too much for a mother she wants more time for herself. She should not be forced to spend a large amount of that time in the child-care centre. Many parents like to talk with others about problems with their child, few however want patronising interference from an "expert".

The priorities for government action

Here I will be brief. It seems to me that the introduction of regulations providing subsidies for all child-care centres is of paramount importance, particularly with a view to ensuring adequate financing and equal rights for workers in the different child-care centres. The system of subsidising through municipal authorities should remain, but with the difference that every municipality should be entitled to claim government money if the number of child-care centres is sufficient. National standards will have to be drawn up in regard to the maximum number of children per worker, size of groups and classrooms, hygiene and the like. Sufficient scope should be given to local authorities to respond to local requirements and experiment with child-care centre education. Furthermore, national regulations will have to be introduced for training, in-service training and coaching.

H. CHILD-CARE CENTRES: IN THE INTEREST OF BOTH MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

In conclusion I would like to return to the relation between child-care centre developments and the women's emancipation movement in the Netherlands. For the most part the problems of women and children have the same origin: individualisation of the family, separation of private and social life, the function of domestic work and education in an industrialised society with capitalistic production relations (Ussel, 1975; Neidhardt, 1975).

Many child-care centres were founded by parents, mostly mothers, looking for a solution to the position into which they and their children had been manoeuvred. The interests of the child have however so far prevailed. Within the child-care centres more attention seems to be given to increasing the quality in favour of the children. In such a situation increasing institutionalisation, professionalisation and estrangement of the child-care centres from the parents seems a not unlikely development (de Jong, 1976). Too much attention to the central position of children may cause the interests of women to be neglected. If the child-care centres become unmindful of the reasons why they were originally set up, the chances are that they will merely serve to patch up present-day family problems and lose their refreshing élan. This will not serve the interests of the children or their mothers. If the women's emancipation movement wants to be more than just a discussion group for women, it will have to develop a strategy creating alternatives for a woman's tasks in the family. Only changes in the traditional husband-and-wife roles, the social organisation of domestic affairs and education of children can free the housewife from her isolated family position. Child-care centres can play a major role in this process. In my opinion a further analysis of the position of children, women and families in present-day society is all-important. It is equally important that both the play group movement and the women's emancipation movement take more interest in each other's work. Only then may child-care centres develop into places where people, while working there, acquire a better understanding of their own situation and where new ways of life can be explored.

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IV

BUILDING ECOLOGIES FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: TOWARDS A SOCIAL POLICY FOR THE CHILD

by

Kurt Lüscher

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A. INTRODUCTION

The social dependency of the young generation in the human species lasts much longer than that of any other form of life and the problems involved are consequently more demanding and more complex. The manner in which we handle and should handle children is bound up with experiences, ideas and norms that are passed on from one generation to another and which are expressed in man's cultural and social life. Thus, for example, the culture determines who has to care for individual children and prescribes how this task should be carried out. The fact that these patterns of behaviour have biological roots is nowadays as generally accepted as it is obvious that in the course of history changes have occurred because of the social structuring of this task, i.e. its institutionalisation. These changes in turn are dependent upon the living space of groups and societies and upon social organisation. These societal or institutional components of child care and child education are the point of departure for all social policies for the child.

The development of measures and institutions for children is closely connected with the child's role in society, which is in turn an expression of the changing understanding of the child's own needs with respect to its care and education. This changing understanding seems to have led to a rapidly expanding recognition of how care and education mutually influence one another and how this connection represents the condition for the development of the individual personality (Lüscher, 1975). The following societal conditions were of special relevance for this development:

- Demographic shifts, due to a reduction in the infant and child mortality rate since the middle of the eighteenth century. Until about 1750 more than half the children born died before reaching adulthood.
- Economic changes which have made it necessary for more and more people to separate work and home life and which have brought about large migrations, increasing urbanisation and, in connection with these trends, have generated new forms of relationships between the generations instead of their living together.
- Political innovations, which have increasingly fostered, on the one hand, the recognition of every man's individuality and, consequently, of his right to political and religious freedom,and, on the other, the construction of a modern social entity resulting among other things in the introduction of compulsory education.

In the wake of the expanding differentiation between society and the state, the state has become responsible for undertaking measures and establishing legal precepts for the protection of disadvantaged groups, especially low-income and unemployed families. Very early on there were laws and institutions for the benefit of children working in factories. They were paralleled in some cases by the activities of non-government organisations which had already taken an interest in the welfare of children. These activities stimulated further measures, including various forms of co-operation with government agencies. The present need for an integrated view of social measures for children - as indicated, e.g. by the emergence of the concept of childhood policy (see, for example, Norwegian Ministry of Consumer Affairs, 1978) - parallels the public sector's increasing interest in questions concerning the status of the child in society. This is by no means an accident. For the first time in human history, having children is no longer axiomatic. Because of the development of completely safe means of contraception and their widespread distribution, many parents are confronted with questions concerning the "meaning" of children, or more concretely, the social conditions under which children could and should grow up.

It is the purpose of this presentation to give an analysis of institutions and organisations which are deliberately meant to influence the living conditions of children in general and of special categories of children while attempting to identify the elements of a general frame of reference relevant for both theory and practice.

B. PREVAILING THEMES AND TOPICS

1. The concept of "social policy for the child"

A prerequisite for any definition of social policy for the child is the concept of socialisation which was introduced into the social sciences early this century. The concept is made up of two components which are dealt with in the literature but which are usually not referred to or not referred to explicitly enough. We shall therefore attempt the following definition, which is in three parts:

- Relative to the individual, socialisation refers to all those processes through which the individual, in interaction with his environment and with himself, develops relatively enduring patterns of behaviour enabling him to take part in social life and, circumstances permitting, participate in its change.
- Relative to the collectivity, socialisation indicates the differentiated and sometimes contradictory interaction of all those societal institutions, such as family and the school, which are an expression of the institutionalised understanding of the task of caring for and educating children.
- The empirical reality of socialisation develops out of the manner in which through social institutions and processes, the individual and the societal perspectives are combined. It constitutes the starting point for research into socialisation. The parents and the family are assigned a key role here.

The societal component of socialisation reaches its limits with the individual component. This means that all efforts to determine the collective aims for socialisation are limited in that individual persons show, by definition, individual, i.e. independent behavioural patterns and develop their own conception of socialisation. The effects of collective structuring of socialisation are therefore basically not completely predictable at the level of individual behaviour. And of course behavioural conformity may vary in its extent. Furthermore, socialisation takes place in an environment which is continually changing. As the environment changes, new attitudes and measures become necessary. The understanding of socialisation can also change under the influence of previous experiences as well as in regard to suppositions concerning future requirements. It follows from these considerations that socialisation cannot be classified simply in terms of a means and an end. Instead, it has to be recognised as a fundamentally open-ended process, although the extent of open-endedness may vary. Historical developments relativise the task which nonetheless presents a renewed challenge to every generation.

Social policy for the child relates then to the task of creating skeleton societal conditions, i.e. suitable living conditions for the prosperity and optimal development of future generations. This in turn necessitates conceptions about the structure of the living conditions of children, knowledge about the possible effects of various environments or measures and conceptions about the desirability or undesirability of those effects. Here an antinomy is revealed between the basic open-endedness of socialisation and the concrete structuring or changing of the living conditions of children which are as a rule oriented toward plausible goals. This antinomy can only be resolved pragmatically, i.e. by reference to historical situations. Social policy for the child is thus a planned historical concretisation of the anthropologically determined task of child-care and child education.

History also shows that the understanding of the independent societal role of the child developed in interrelation to the assessment of individuality. The more this was the case, i.e. the stronger the societal tendency became to redefine the role of the child, the more necessary it became to have "mediators" to show each individual child how it was possible within the limits laid down by society to develop its own individuality. Establishing a societal role for the child meant that environments were created specifically for children or that the special needs of children were considered in the planning of their everyday living conditions. The more the "ecology of childhood" was structured in this way, the more important were those persons who interpreted this environment with the individual child or, during the early years, for him, with respect to his own individuality and who influenced and changed it where necessary. Not just the role of the child but those of the mother, the father and other educators, caretakers and counsellors were accentuated in this way. They assumed responsibility for shaping the child's immediate environment and by virtue of this task became the recipients of social policy measures directed essentially at the child. In particular, the parents are assigned a special position, which must be considered as basic for an analysis of social policy for the child (see point 2).

An adequate conceptualisation of the environment of children is absolutely essential to social policy analysis. The interrelationship between the directly experienceable everyday environment, the spatial form surrounding it and the societal context as a whole have to be taken into account. In addition, it has to be recognised that living conditions in society may also have an indirect influence on the daily life of children. Social policy measures for children, even those concerned with the introduction of isolated facilities, by definition involve a mutual state of dependency between the various branches or levels of the ecology of childhood. An essential goal of social policy for children is to relate these various areas to one another in such a way that together they lead to the optimisation of the child's living environment (see point 4).

Only those who possess the power or the influence to shape or change the living conditions of certain categories of children as they interrelate with the immediate and not-so-immediate social environment can assume responsibility for these social policy measures. Legitimation is also necessary given the requirements of a constitutional democracy. This legitimation is obvious for the activities of governmental agencies, insofar as these activities are legally sanctioned. But the activities and facilities of the non-profit welfare associations are also often legally controlled, directly if they are made responsible for particular measures or facilities, and indirectly if they are performing tasks assigned by the government or if the government regulates the personnel or basic operation of the facilities. In this way firms can also be responsible for social policy measures. Typical of this area are private initiatives and self-help programmes. Difficult problems of legitimation have to be reckoned with at this point. An essential characteristic of social policy for the child is that it requires a specific understanding and knowledge of children. In contrast with traditional social policy measures, where the structuring of labour relations, i.e. man's conflict with "the outside world", serves as the point of departure, the formation of public opinion is more relevant for social policy for the child (see point 3).

Social policy for the child then, to offer a brief definition, refers to those social measures and institutions for the structuring and improvement of the living conditions of all children or certain categories of children which are either directly or indirectly legitimated through the legal system. A general view of social policy for the child analyses the interdependency of the various sectors of society relative to the optimal well-being and development of children. In this way one can call social policy for the child the publicly legitimated shaping of the "ecology of childhood".

2. The special status of parents and the family

Children are dependent upon other persons to mediate between their individuality and the demands of society. This function is fulfilled first and foremost by parents. It is usually described in the following way: Parents introduce their children to the values, norms and behaviours of their immediate (e.g. subcultural) and less immediate (e.g. economic) environment and pass on to them the experiences corresponding to their socio-structural position, i.e. their stratum or class. Their child care and education activities are given the general term of "style of education". Thus, the family is regarded as an "environmental agency or mediator" insofar as the parents select, create and shape its material, social and cultural environment. In this way the parents are able to guide the child's learning and development processes. Differences in parental behaviour and in the effects on children can be determined according to the type of family policy measures as well as the specific social situation (see Kaufmann et al., 1978).

An additional perspective can be gained from the sociology of knowledge. One can conceive, as a point of departure, that the parents are responsible for the personal development of their child before the child has his or her own idea of him/herself and before the child is fully aware of his/her own wishes. This occurs because the parents possess from the birth of their child on, and in fact before this, specific knowledge of the details of the life of the child. These are the building blocks of the child's personal identity as well as his biography. For example, facts about the circumstances of birth, the child's behaviour during the first few months and years of life and significant events in the immediate environment are all relevant here. This is, as it were, one side of the mediating function of parents. The other side concerns, first, the way in which knowledge about the child's person is tied to conceptions of what children, growing up in a particular society and in a particular group within this society, should be like and, second, how this knowledge is connected with general knowledge of the social environment and the demands it places on the child, on young persons and on adults. Concrete interrelationships influence the manner in which parents shape daily life and the family environment as well as decisions in "problematical" situations (e.g. choosing the school or occupation).

This is also the essence of parental authority. Parents have to take such decisions by weighing up alternative interests and they have to endure a certain amount of uncertainty. In certain circumstances they have only incomplete knowledge of the demands made by society. But most of all, they are not able to determine precisely what sort of a person their child would like to become (see Lüscher, 1979a). Described in this way, the mediating role of parents acquires a special responsibility. As long as the parental household constitutes the sole living space of the child, the position of the parents remains unchallenged. The question arises, however, to what extent they are actually aware of this responsibility, the extent to which, for example, they succeed in reconciling the interests of their child with other interests, including their own.

Beside parents, other persons are also able to take responsibility for the child. In this case a number of important and disputed questions arise with respect to a social policy for the child. According to the one extreme, full responsibility of the parents should be recognised and financial support placed completely at their disposal. In political circles, this position is attacked with the argument that complete autonomy of the family does not exist. It is argued that measures based on these false premises serve to support the existing societal relationships, use the family as a vehicle for social reproduction and are conservative or even reactionary. In fact it appears again and again, and not only in special but also in typical cases, that parents are not fully aware of their mediating function. This can happen when a member of the family dies or the parents divorce or separate, when a mother, especially a very young mother, has to bring up children alone or when children represent a special problem, for example, owing to physical or mental handicaps. Here financial help alone is often insufficient, so that it becomes necessary to find other forms of support, which are addressed as a rule directly to children. In this way parental or familial autonomy is invaded. Moreover, the parents themselves often want to receive forms of assistance other than just financial.

Especially significant are incidents where the parents do not care adequately for their children or where the children are abused or neglected. Such cases are reported time and again, but, since many are not, the real figures can only be guessed at. The behaviour of children and teenagers, especially when it is characterised as deviant or mentally disturbed, is occasionally regarded as having repercussions on the ability of certain families to raise children, by which is often meant polemically the middle class family, or the modern nuclear family.

This view leads to the opposite extreme that the care and education of children should be organised outside the family. Characteristically, corresponding descriptions are frequently found in utopian schemes (see Giehler, 1976). In political discussion, this position is seldom explicitly justified. It is, however, occasionally conceded, especially when measures and institutions are interpreted as an expression of a tendency toward the collectivisation of child care and education, for example, day care, children's homes and, at an earlier date, kindergartens. In this respect, the discussions on child rearing on the kibbutz (see Liegle, 1977), in the Soviet Union (Bronfenbrenner, 1970; Liegle, 1970), in China (Kessen, 1975) and the discussion on the German "day-mothers project" (Arbeitsgruppe Tagesmütter, 1977) are quite interesting. In contrast to these extreme positions the concept of social policy for the child departs from the task of child care and education (in contrast to ideological positions concerning the nature of the child and the family), taking into account both a social and an individual component.

"Social policy for the child" as reality and as postulate, then, lies factually somewhere between these two extremes mentioned above. As a reality it indicates that there are a series of measures, institutions and programmes aimed directly at children. Moreover, family assistance is often made available with explicit reference to special aspects of child care and education. As postulate, social policy for the child means that an optimal handling of the matter can be achieved, when the task of socialising the child is placed in the centre of attention. This is possible by recognising the special position of the family, as supported by empirical facts, while at the same time recognising the necessity for additional systems surrounding the family.

Since the focus is on the family, several measures can be distinguished from one another:

a) those designed to enable children to grow up in a family, without prescribing more closely the necessary qualities of the family.
b) those which attempt to influence the family environment in some specific way.
c) those which complement the family by giving children the chance to be active outside the home.
d) those which take over the function of family in certain circumstances.

In order to facilitate the conceptualisation of this matter, there are a number of concepts which can be defined as follows: measures, institutions and programmes, whose aim is to assist families in finding solutions to problems within the family, i.e. self-responsible solutions, are referred to as supporting the family. Measures which allow children to fulfil a part of their activities outside of the family circle, while at the same time living at home, are considered as complementing the family. Finally, measures which provide the child with a home outside the family are considered as replacing the family.

3. The child and public opinion

Whoever advocates social policy for the child is confronted with specific difficulties. Like all policies, social policy for the child is also determined by conflicting interests, conflicts over the distribution of scarce resources and efforts toward an acceptable legitimation. But the situation is atypical insofar as children are not able to articulate their interests themselves in political circles. Even the parents are difficult to organise. Furthermore, a social policy for the child whose usefulness cannot be demonstrated or can only be demonstrated incompletely and with respect to future developments requires financing. The rationale for such policies is therefore necessarily one-sided, in that a following can only be found by means of universally telling arguments. There are also a number of additional difficulties. Although it is scarcely open to contradiction that children should be given the best possible chance for individual development, the liability is missing in the general demands. Moreover, questions concerning the structuring of childhood tend to awake personal memories about one's own childhood or children; hence the highly subjective views held even by those in public office. Finally, it should be remembered that at the present time the family is considered to be a private domain par excellence.

Hence, before one can proceed with measures for a social policy for the child it is necessary as a rule to give more publicity to the situation or importance of children in general or the position of specific categories of children. Some examples are:

- situations in which the meaning of children for society as a whole is recognised (for example, in connection with the decline in the birth rate and the economic consequences that can be expected to obtain);
- the situation of children in obvious need (e.g. child labour);
- spectacular individual cases (e.g. ill-treatment of children);
- situations of financial distress.

Such contributions to a definition of the situation of children and the recommendations for social policy measures for children reveal particular points of view. With respect to propositions made by Kaufmann et al. (1978) one can make the following distinctions:

a) The point of view of the child. The special feature of this perspective is that children are either unable or barely able to articulate their own interests.

b) The point of view of the parents. Parents tend to think about the needs of their own children and in this respect their point of view is particularistic. It is essential that parents should express children's needs according to their own understanding while at the same time taking into account their own interests as adults or as husband and wife.

c) The point of view of the staff of educational and child-care institutions. There exists a direct relationship to the organisation as well as the children entrusted to their care. Their perspective is consequently particularistic, but not in the same way as in the case of parents. This is due to the fact that they tend to take into consideration the organisation concerned and the people with whom staff typically have to deal.

d) The point of view of the professions and the sciences. This perspective is universalistic while at the same time recognising obligations with respect to the profession or discipline.

e) The point of view of members of bureaucratic organisations. It involves implementing publically legitimated norms and goals based on general principles. At the same time, the question of which body is responsible is often of importance.

f) The point of view of those representing different associations existing within the society. This perspective is - by definition - universalistic. However, the actual experiences of these representatives with children are often those with their own children. For this reason their relationship is, in the rhetoric, often particularistic, at least for purposes of illustration.

The following outline attempts to summarise the most important ways in which politically relevant treatments of living conditions (i.e. of the situation of children) are handled, and to illustrate this through examples.

Without detailed case studies, which have not yet been carried out, it is not possible to state the exact way in which descriptions of the situation of children can reach the attention of the general public. This seems to be the case when several perspectives overlap and support one another and especially when subjective views coincide with objective representations. Generally speaking, mechanisms which have been identified through an analysis of social movements should be relevant (Cf. e.g. Toch, 1965; Turner and Killian, 1972).

Such descriptions can relate to any aspect of the ecology of childhood so that the prime recipient will be an individual institution or official. At the same time it should be remembered that a specific aspect of the ecology of children is often interrelated with other aspects. In other words, such situations are often complex. For this reason there are frequently more than one recipient even among officials. This is because of the already-mentioned comprehensive task of social policy. In the absence of specific research relying on general considerations on ecology and human development and historical experience (see Bronfenbrenner, 1979, and Lüscher, 1979b), descriptions of situations and recommendations for their improvement have a better chance of being understood and accepted, the more one or more of the following conditions are met:

- when the problem being described is viewed in the same way by those immediately concerned ("ecological validity" of social policy measures);
- when the problem is viewed in the same way by those less immediately concerned, i.e. by those who are closely involved with those immediately concerned;
- when the evaluation of the situation can be linked plausibly with the general cultural views of immediate and less immediate participants as well as those responsible for the measures;

TYPES OF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN AVAILABLE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, WITH EXAMPLES

Type of description	List of examples
1. Comprehensive description of the living conditions of children and families	
a) official governmental or administrative commissions	- 1st Family Report in Germany (Familienbericht of the government), 1968. White Papers (United Kingdom)
b) official reports by experts	- 2nd Family Report in Germany (contributions by experts), 1975. Contributions to the OECD project on Early Childhood (CERI, 1977)
c) independent reports by experts	- Reports of scientific councils. Carnegie Council on Children (1977). Kellmer Pringle (1974)
d) monographs	- Tizard et al. (1976) etc.
e) social indicators for children	- Foundation for Child Development (1977)
f) opinion surveys	- American Family Report (1974/75, 1976/77). Children's Survey (FCD, 1978)
g) political proclamations	- Key, Das Jahrhundert des Kindes
2. Evaluation studies	
- comparative evaluations	White (1973), Bronfenbrenner (1973), Arbeitsgruppe Tagesmütter (1977)
- evaluations of individual experiments	Arbeitsgruppe Tagesmütter (1977)
3. Studies concerning the effects of specific measures	
- effects of several measures	- Kaufmann et al. (1978)
- effects of individual measures	- Lüscher and Fisch (1977)
4. Case studies	
- comparison of several cases	- Psychoanalytical Literature
- well-known individual cases	- Psychoanalytical Literature
5. Descriptions of individual lives	
- autobiographical	Haley, Roots
- documentary	Lewis, Children of Sanchez
- novelistic or narrative	

- when the recommended measures are seen with respect to available resources and the necessary organisational measures as workable by the immediate and less immediate participants as well as by those responsible for social policy measures.

The problems of children (and families) are generally not given high priority in political discussions. The question of how recommendations for the improvement of the living situation of children can be translated into effective political action is really a question of comparatively powerless groups being able to push through their interests.

Recommendations benefiting children (and families) may have a better chance of being implemented as social policy measures when one or more of the following conditions are met:

- when those who undertake to describe the situation are at the same time responsible for the implementation of relevant measures;
- when the recommended measures represent an extension or a differentiation of measures already institutionalised;
- when the costs - relative to the individual beneficiaries - are low;
- when the number of direct or indirect beneficiaries is large;
- when the recommended measures provide for active co-operation by the immediate participants;
- when the success of the measures is within sight;
- when the problems can be demonstrated to be relevant and urgent;
- when the problems have a plausible link with problems in other areas or among other population groups who are likewise interested in a solution to the problems;
- when the solution of these problems can be demonstrated to be relevant for the development of the society as a whole.

4. The ecology of human development

The living conditions of children are quite diverse. They depend upon the given economic, political and cultural situations and are the result of different historical developments. Nevertheless, it is possible to make the following generalisations for the purpose of a systematic review:

a) In modern industrialised societies children grow up principally in small nuclear families. Responsibility for the care and education of children in the early years lies for the most part with the parents, who are allowed a certain amount of autonomy in structuring their children's everyday living situation. The pre-eminent position of the nuclear family today has mainly developed since the eighteenth century.

b) Paralleling this developing of the nuclear family's relatively autonomous living space, networks of more or less formalised social relationships and public institutions have arisen to support and to some extent complement the family, for example: institutionalised day care, education in kindergartens or schools, informing and counselling parents by means of general parent education and special services, and finally, medical care and comprehensive health insurance.

c) In the course of this development the relationship of the nuclear family to other organisations and institutions, whose activities are not aimed primarily at the child, has become increasingly important. These organisations and institutions indirectly support or hinder parents in perceiving their obligations and responsibilities. Examples are housing conditions, the world of work, and leisure facilities.

d) The care and education of the child is dependent upon views, ideas or conceptions about children prevalent in main sectors of the society, e.g. in business, politics, culture and religion. They are expressed in the increasingly refined description of the legal position of the child, in the development of sciences concerned specifically with the child and in social policy measures.

These relationships can be considered as forming four partially overlapping areas: the first is the everyday life of the family, the second the neighbourhood and community, the third the environments which have an indirect effect on the child, for example, the organisation of work, and the fourth the overlapping political and cultural institutions of society as a whole.

Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1970) conceives of these areas as systems, i.e. as micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro-systems. Such a model can be described as an "ecology of childhood". Suggestions for describing the ecology of childhood have been made by other authors as well, for example, Brim (1975) and Bargel et al. (1976). All these models start with the daily living situation of children and use this to determine differences in behaviour and development in the light of general societal relations and changes in them. The usefulness of such holistic approaches has been increasingly recognised; nevertheless serious problems arise in this connection with multi-level analysis (see on this Bertram, 1977).

The following positions can be stated within the limits of the described model and on the basis of the results of empirical research into the effects of various living conditions on the welfare and development of the child (see for a more detailed treatment Bronfenbrenner, 1979 and L'scher, 1979b).

a) The welfare and development of children depend - especially during the early years - on the quality of the child's relationship to the parents, which in turn is influenced by the relations of the parents to one another and by the way in which parents are assisted or hindered through these relations and in their role as parents.

b) Depending on economic and cultural developments, children spend as they grow older an ever larger part of their daily life in child-care and educational institutions outside the family. The effects of these institutions on the well-being and development of the children are all the more favourable the better the co-operation between these institutions and the parental home is, that is, the more the parents are allowed to be involved in this care and education outside the home. Putting it more generally, the effects of the differentiation of the child's living space which becomes necessary as the child grows older can be favourably influenced through institutionalised relationships and personal contacts between the various areas and the persons active within them.

c) The well-being of children and their development depend upon the development and the societal formation of areas of human activity in which the children, as a rule, do not themselves live. This is particularly the case for areas, e.g. the world of work, where the persons responsible for the children spend an essential part of their time.

d) The welfare and the development of children are influenced by the many different conceptions of knowledge which are drawn upon to define the living situation of children. They are the more effective, the more they are integrated in daily life, i.e. the more attuned they are to the immediate and subjective experiences of the parents and other educators. The well-being and the development of children, especially their sense of personal identity, are positively influenced by those conceptions offering children and those looking after them the chance for individual differentiation and interpretation.

Measures and institutions for a social policy for children can be interpreted as attempts to improve the ecology of childhood. This ecology of social relations has a spatial as well as a temporal dimension and can be viewed both from an individual and from a societal point of view. These aspects form the limiting conditions for the success of any concrete act of intervention.

Definitive criteria for an evaluation cannot be formulated solely on the basis of premises taken from the social sciences. If socialisation is conceived of, however, as an open, evolutionary process, then social policy measures can be conceived of - theoretically - as a search for better social environments for human development. In practice the main task, now more than in the past perhaps, is to alleviate obvious disadvantages or deteriorations of special groups of children. Here lies so to speak the pragmatic component of a social policy for the child.

Both of these points of reference, i.e. the constant effort to improve the general conditions of human development, and the prevention of acute emergencies are, as it were, the two poles between which measures are conceived, carried out and evaluated. They can be found in various intervention strategies: on the one hand, in the development of "models" or model programmes and, on the other, in efforts to improve already existing measures and institutions. They find their expression further in theoretical efforts to describe generally children's needs and to formulate a general theory of human development, and in practical efforts to alleviate individual disadvantages and afflictions here and now.

Ultimately, the improvement of the living conditions of individual children and of children in general is more than finding a solution for one among many social functions. It can also be basic for the solution of many social problems. This view, which is gaining in popularity, is a good argument for the demand for a social policy for the child.

C. PROPOSITIONS

In conclusion, I would like to put forward some general propositions concerning an active social policy for children based on previous descriptions and on the present social situation in modern, industrial societies (see also Kaufmann et al., 1978, and Lüscher, 1979b):

1. Social policy for children has first of all the task of improving the general living conditions of all children and eliminating the disadvantages of special groups of children (e.g. those of ethnic minorities), in order to create optimal conditions for personal growth and fulfilment of each child. Second, a social policy for the child involves fighting to prevent or get rid of measures which degrade the quality of children's living conditions. Third, social policy for the child means enlightening the general public about the general and special needs of children.
2. Judging by accumulated historical experience, the family is in our culture the social institution which potentially

can create the best possible living environment for children. Parents can also, potentially, best perceive the comprehensive responsibility necessary for the development of the individual child's personality. For these reasons one of the first aims of child policy is to provide parents with the prerequisites for the optimal fulfilment of these tasks here and now. However, there exists not just one but a wide variety of types of family in which parents want to and are able to perceive their necessary responsibilities; single mothers and fathers in particular belong to this group.

3. Historical insight into the special position of the family is inseparably linked with acknowledging the fact that the family does not perceive the task of caring for and bringing up children as an isolated or fully autonomous one but rather as one supported and complemented by other societal institutions. A policy for children involves recognising and assisting the efforts of measures and institutions supporting and complementing the family. These include financial assistance, services and specific educational facilities in the most diverse areas of societal policy.
4. In doing this it has to be recognised that the success of child policy measures depends in almost every case largely upon the behaviour and co-operation of parents. The reality of the whole living situation of children has to confront the fragmented organisation of political and administrative agencies responsible for children and families which, because of their legal regulations, are unable as a rule to pay sufficient consideration to individual cases. Hence the interest of parents in their own children has proved to be an indispensable precondition for the success of public measures, despite the possible shortcomings of parental behaviour in some cases. Any analysis of the living conditions of children must therefore take into account as much as possible the personal understanding of the people involved. All measures should encourage the involvement of the children, parents, educators and counsellors concerned.
5. The overlapping of the social areas which form as a whole the living situation of children must be taken into account. When possible, measures should aim at strengthening groups or systems. The intricate network of systems which form the totality of the ecology of childhood should be carefully assessed. Special attention should be paid to those societal factors and political sectors, (e.g. the organisation of labour) which are not seen as directly connected with the living condition of children or families, but which influence them indirectly to a great extent.

6. Children are affected by a number of governmental measures, most obviously in the areas of family policy and educational policy and in pre-school education, but also in the areas of housing policy, traffic policy and general social policy. Children are also indirectly affected by measures which primarily affect the living situation and behaviour of their parents, for example labour regulations, employment policy or divorce law reform. An effective social policy for the child cannot be the task of only one agency or ministry; it necessarily requires a comprehensive horizontal approach. Thus, co-ordinating bodies must be set up by the state. This also applies to the relations between bodies at the federal, state and local levels.

7. Traditionally in almost all countries voluntary organisations of all types have been fulfilling important functions in the field of policies for children and families. These private initiatives are an important pre-condition for preserving the multiplicity of available services, which are in turn a necessary correlative of pluralism and ultimately of the right to individuality. Moreover, the activities of the voluntary organisations keep down costs, since their staffs are often unpaid, private participation is often sponsored and the involvement of the parents themselves is encouraged.

8. The increased professionalisation of many occupations and the rising number of professionals concerned with the care and education of children, with counselling and educating parents and with the administration of social policy measures is a sign of improved expert knowledge in dealing with children. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that the tendency also exists in these professions to create their own demand. The danger of parents becoming "amateurs" or "lay educators" should not be under-estimated. For this reason, the aim of all services and measures must be to help parents and children to help themselves.

9. Within the framework of these principles, and in the light of historical developments and experiences, it is important for an active social policy for children that new models and programmes for improving the living situations of children and families should be tested and experiments with alternative forms of living be given unprejudiced consideration.

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SOME THOUGHTS ON "MODELS OF SOCIAL MANAGEMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES"

by

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Any analysis of the attempts made in France to manage children's services on a more collective and rational basis is impossible without a realisation of the extent to which the idea of social management appears to be remote from the practices and objectives of the bodies concerned with childhood education in that country. It might be helpful, in the first instance, to describe the particular situation prevailing in France. We then propose to consider the various approaches to another type of management and another mode of operating children's services. These will be subjected to critical analysis and finally a few practical examples will be elaborated as alternative solutions to the actual problems experienced by the users of these services (the children themselves, their families and the neighbourhood concerned). Is it possible to devise forms of collective management which are not geared to the aspirations of the individuals and groups concerned and not normalised by officialdom? If not, the most ideal systems will be no more than technocratic responses, totally ineffectual except as more subtle ways of imposing authoritarianism and specific codes of conduct.

Young children in France are allocated to the existing facilities for "care" (crèches, kindergartens, child-minders), for play (public gardens, playgrounds)(1), for treatment (physical examinations, mental tests), for education (infant schools) and for "maternal care"

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1) The playgrounds or "adventure" grounds are organised to a greater or lesser extent, controlled by various bodies, i.e. sometimes a municipality and sometimes an association, and generally supervised by one or more adults. For example municipal playgrounds are available to infant and primary teachers in school hours but not to the children of the neighbourhood (whatever their category) except after school hours. The principle is to ensure the strict segregation of one category of children from another. Access to public gardens is unrestricted at certain hours and they are supervised by an often ill-tempered keeper.

/families, holiday camps for infants, Aide Sociale à l'Enfance(1)/, on the basis of a sometimes contradictory, compartmentalised reasoning. Although a child is free to circulate from one location or service to another he is nonetheless classified and "coded" in systems which though often similar in their operation and their locations ignore each other's existence.

The least paradoxical aspect of this segregation is that when the child's parents are dealing with the infant school, the child-care centre and the playground, for example, they are dealing with three different authorities each with its standing regulations, administrative constraints and bureaucracy. At a period when efforts are rightly being made to help young mothers and simplify the relations between users and their administration this kind of situation is unlikely to facilitate the collective or "social" management of children's services.

Further thinking about this initial fact tends to enlarge the dimensions of the problem. The children who are cared for by these compartmentalised services gradually tend to be characterised by their "membership" of one or another institution. This places the children in a kind of imposed "typology" or "classification" (which will therefore be imposed on their parents and those concerned with their care) and inserts them into a "logical" stream, travelling along "compulsory" channels, heading for a "predictable" type of development. For example, it will be said that a "crèche" child "adapts" rapidly and satisfactorily to the infant school but sometimes causes disturbances associated with the experience of group phenomena he has already acquired and the ease he feels in a collective environment. On the other hand, a child who has been looked after by its mother may be more advanced in abstract language when he goes to school but will have difficulty in adapting to the group and display attitudes which reflect his isolation and even a one-sided exacerbated attachment to his mother in certain cases. Subsequently, the infant school will operate as a new factor of classification: in three months the new entrant will, in his turn, become an "infant school" child....

In this way the individual and collective experiences of each child are reduced to a common level and his personal "history" is indistinguishable from his "adaptation" to the institution. However, our own work in the crèches has led us to conclude that this compartmentalisation stifles the social and libidinal experience of the

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1) The Aide Sociale à l'Enfance is concerned with children who are either "in moral or physical danger" or need, for one reason or another, to be temporarily or permanently removed from their family environment. There are normally two types of placement: with child-minders or in institutions.

children at each stage and adversely affects the specific relations which are formed between the adults and the children. But it is precisely this collective existence with its practical procedures, its incidents(1) and its institutional furniture which generates living dimensions and a network of exchange and interconnections in a way impossible in compartmentalised systems.

A. COMPARTMENTALISATION AND ITS ORIGINS

We now propose to analyse this compartmentalisation or fragmentation of the services concerned in some detail before considering how it can be counteracted.

1. Compartmentalisation of services and subordination to the administrative code

Under the Code which governs the French administrative system, the institutions concerned with early childhood must comply with a number of regulations and stipulations before they can be approved and subsequently financed by the state or the local authorities.

Below are a few examples drawn from current legislation:

a) Institutions concerned with the protection, care or placing of children of pre-school and infant school age(2)

"Medical and technical supervision shall be exercised by the departmental director of health, and administrative and financial supervision by the principal inspectors of the departmental directorates of population on all institutions and private individuals concerned with the protection, care and placement of children of pre-school and infant school age."

"The institutions and public and private services or private individuals referred to in the first paragraph of the present article cannot exercise their activity without the authorisation of the prefect following the advice of the departmental director of health."

"Any decision to refuse this authorisation must be justified. The departmental director of health shall be empowered at any time to verify the state of health of the persons who are brought into contact with children in the exercise of the activities referred to above, either on their own account or in the service of others."

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1) The word "incidents" is used here to denote a break, and the eruption of a new desire.

2) Code de la Santé publique. Protection sanitaire de la famille et de l'enfance. Protection maternelle et infantile. Article L.180. (Regulations for the protection of parents and young children.)

b) Placing of children with a child-minder or in an institution

- Paragraph 1: Requirements to be met by child-minders or day-mothers.

. Article L.169 (amended by Act No. 64-677 of 6 July 1964). Code of Public Health, Volume II, Chapter IV, Section III.

"Any person who is prepared to receive one or more children of pre-school age in her home for day and night care and for a duration of more than eight days is required to obtain beforehand the attestations and certificates laid down in the Decree. The departmental director of health or his representative may require the production of some or all of these attestations and certificates from any person who receives one or more children of pre-school age in her home for day care only and for a duration of more than eight days."

"Any claim or statement in the above documents which is found to be false shall be punished by a period of imprisonment ranging from 10 days to 6 months and a fine of 500 to 5,000 francs."

. Article 11 - decree No. 62-840 of 19 July 1962:

"The persons referred to in Article L.169 (first paragraph) of the Code of Public Health are required, before receiving children in care, to obtain:

1. A certificate from the departmental director of health issued after an investigation conducted by a welfare officer attesting to the good moral character of the person concerned and that of any persons with whom she is directly associated, her ability to rear children and the satisfactory sanitary condition of her living accommodation. The attestation shall specify the means of livelihood of the child-minder and the number of children she is able to receive for care (which may not exceed three).

The welfare officer shall ensure inter alia that neither the child-minder nor any person immediately associated with her is a known alcoholic.

2. A certificate from the mayor of the district in which the person concerned resides specifying her civil status.

3. A medical certificate stating that neither the child-minder nor any person likely to live with the child is suffering from any infection likely to be harmful to the child (see the terms of the circular of 1 August 1969)."

c) Notification required in cases where children are placed with a child-minder or in an institution

. Article L. 171 (superseded by decrees No. 64-931 of 3 September 1964 and No. 64-932 of 3 September 1964).

. Article 2 of decree No. 64-931 of 3 September 1964 supplementing Article 11 of decree No. 62-840 of 19 July 1962:

- Article II-1 - When a child is placed with a child-minder or in day and night care, his or her health record book must be deposited with the child-minder.
- Article II-3 - Two registers shall be maintained at each town hall:
  Register No.1: notifications by parents receiving a child-minder in their home or placing their child with a child minder or in day and night care for a period exceeding eight days.
  Register No.2: notifications by child-minders or day mothers who receive an infant or young child in their home for nursing or day and night care.

The right of the institution to exist is determined by its conformity with the regulations and standards, i.e. its subordination to the administrative code.

It is clear that even in the case of "private" institutions, which finance themselves entirely or partially, the control of supervisory administrations is inescapable. This is all the truer as private institutions are generally obliged to apply to the public authorities (departmental or national) for subsidies to cover any operating costs they cannot finance from their own resources (contributions from parents and their own funds).

It could be said that the administrative code is the instrument by which schemes affecting early childhood are (or are not) put into effect. It is literally the code of social demand. The point of departure of institutions concerned with early childhood is therefore not social demand but the administrative code (see "Recherches" No.13, 1973, and No.14, 1974).

The administration acts in fact as a registration system for the only services established will be those which conform to the administrative code. The specifications and structure of any service likely to be set up are potentially contained in the circulars and decrees issued by the administration. This registration system involves a territorial division under which the various responsibilities are assigned. The concepts which determine the classification of children arise out of the territorial division,and the classification tallies, but not specifically, with the distribution of administrative supervisory responsibilities. Children may depend on the PMI, the ASE(1), the Ministry of Education, the mental hygiene service for infants and adolescents, the Ministry of Justice, or the municipalities.

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1) Protection Maternelle et Infantile - Service de la direction départementale d'Action sanitaire et sociale, which is theoretically responsible for the supervision of children from 0 to 6 years of age who are not attending school. /Aide Sociale à l'Enfance (ASE)/.

The classification of children with reference to their supervisory authorities is generally exclusive: an ASE child will have a specific type of placement and will generally not have access to a departmental crèche. As a result of its compartmentalisation (in terms of management, finance and operation) each supervisory area will therefore have to develop (according to its own logic) as a whole early childhood complex for "its" own category of child (e.g. the "adaptation" classes conducted by the Ministry of Education and the child-minder system run by the ASE). There will be no contact with comparable institutions on the territory of a neighbouring administration, there will be no circulation of information and no local training schemes. Segregation and incarceration within a given category begin from the moment of birth.

2. The supply of services as predetermination of demand

As we have seen the administrative code affects the range of available services. In its turn the services classify the demand and personalise it to tally with the family characteristics for which the services cater and the norms and specifications of the services. One particular type of service is designed to meet a particular type of demand; other types of demand which fall outside the existing classifications are unacceptable. Individual(1), social, economic and other characteristics have to conform completely to the rules of admission to the institution concerned. There is no room for exceptional cases which "deviate" from the "official" typology.

The classification of demand is superimposed on the territorial division of powers and responsibilities which means in the event the users take on the roles and play the parts assigned to them in this kind of private, personalised and contractual relationship. If the situation were expressed as a caricature it might be said that the regulations present the "aunty" at the crèche as a substitute mother: the "characters" dumbly stare at one another and there is no possible communication between them.

3. The effects of the theories of early childhood on the compartmentalisation of services

Specialists on early childhood generally treat the needs (or the well-being) of the child in abstract terms which are comparatively rigid and outside his real mode of life. For example, the stages which normally correspond with the child's "needs", i.e. "maternal care", "socialisation", etc. are defined with reference to research on the child's psycho-motor development.... From this perspective most psychological or psychoanalytical research evaluates

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1) The characteristics of the family or the mother as the case may be.

types of care with reference to the extent to which they meet the above "needs" which thus become criteria. As a result of this approach, each type of institution or authority is bound to lack something, i.e. a crèche will "lack" the maternal element and the child-minder or mother will lack socialisation, etc. This interpretation grid which is applied to individual situations and to the specific circumstances of a particular ethnic group or a particular social pattern cannot but act as a super-ego, literally inhibiting any attempt to take responsibility for these problems at the local level.

These "technical" contributions which are largely external to the daily life and practical problems of the institution may "assist" a team in its practical operations but at the same time generate a form of incompetence.

This incompetence is coupled with a further factor, i.e. the rigid classification of children's needs reinforces the existing exclusive classification of families and services.

B. INTEGRATED SERVICES IN FRANCE. CRITICAL ANALYSES

It will be surmised from this description of the situation that social management in France is neither current nor even emergent, any more than the traces of a more community-type management which are to be found in Scandinavian countries. The trend towards more collective management - by the users themselves - is in itself a considerable achievement in a system as centralised and legalistic as our own.

Certain efforts have been made to gauge "demand" as closely as possible (we have seen how demand is influenced by the supply of available services and administrative procedure). There has been an increasing tendency in the technical processes (institutional programming, building projects) to secure the "participation" of the users. There have been joint meetings and even discussions at the planning stage. But these schemes are a snare and a delusion, for the dice are loaded. Problems are in fact generally approached from the standpoint of the existing institutions (which are regarded as immutable). There is no intention to make anything more than comparative "improvements" to plans whose "technical" logic frequently conceals a determination to perennialise existing procedures. A few embellishments may be thrown in (miniature WCs, an attractive colour scheme and a garden) but the layout of the premises is maintained, together with visual control and an obligatory one-way itinerary.

This type of practice, which is designed to associate the users on a rather formal basis with certain stages of programming and building, is particularly illusory in view of the fact that:

1. The preliminary work is not done by the teams that will operate the services whereas it is obvious that teams set up before the actual work starts should participate in this process of "policy simulation" and should of course be financed for this purpose. This contradicts two principles of French practice, i.e. that a service should not be financed until it comes into operation and that appointments should be made solely by seniority and very often subject to the de facto approval of the unions. This means that an experimental innovation can break down because no discrimination is made, when staff are appointed, between people really interested in the innovation and others who are openly opposed to it and likely to engineer its failure.
2. Once a programme has been drawn up and building has begun, it will be extremely difficult to make any changes in the plan. What is the result? A plan may go far to meet the wishes of the users at a particular time, but once it is given effect it becomes eternal. There is no question of any alterations: what is built is solid and unchanging (for example, the layout of the washrooms will make it impossible to use the space they occupy for any other purpose). If there is any change in working procedure once the team has been set up, any reallocation of the existing floor space and functions will call for superhuman ingenuity. To turn a classroom into a kitchen will be difficult because there are no power or water points in the classrooms. In these circumstances there can be no functional mobility and no possibility of converting the premises and making "live" use of them. The adherence to standards and regulations in France makes institutions unchanging by definition; there is no way in which the people working in them can reconvert them at any given time.

We now propose to study a particular case and analyse the efforts which have been made in France to "rationalise" the problems of early and intermediate childhood. The intention was to integrate a number of services concerned with early childhood, i.e. ensure greater simplification, group the services, provide for exchanges and contacts (even physical) between authorities which had hitherto been scattered and antagonistic and which, in any case, had ignored one another.

Realising the difficulties encountered by parents, users and staff owing to the fragmentation of the services concerned with early childhood (the institutions themselves and the more informal providers, e.g. day mothers, etc...), the authorities in charge of this sector have been trying for several years to promote greater flexibility in the care of children and to initiate schemes more effectively adapted to the requirements of parents. The first step was generally to regroup services, thus reducing travelling time and fatigue for both parents and children. Little by little schemes were devised to ensure the spatial integration of the services and facilitate their access and use. This idea, which was unsuccessfully advocated over a long period by such unofficial groups as the Association pour les Centres de la Petite Enfance launched by Françoise Lenoble Prédines has gradually won acceptance, though divorced from the idealogical and political implications which made the project an original one.

The Association pour les Centres de la Petite Enfance was set up in 1968 on the initiative of a multi-disciplinary group of early childhood specialists whose leading figure was Madame Françoise Lenoble Prédines. As a result of initial experience with unofficial crèches (organised by parents and non-parents without the approval or support of the public authorities), e.g. those set up at the Sorbonne and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, in which Françoise Lenoble Prédines and her collaborators participated, two new ideas developed. One was to abolish the arbitrary compartmentalisation which had been imposed in the course of history on the development of the various institutions in charge of early childhood, and the other was to create a continuous living area in place of the enclosed disciplinary areas set up under the prevailing systems. The main policy options of these centres are (ACPE, 1972):

- The establishment of a pre-elementary cycle for all children from 0 to 8-10 years of age (access to the second cycle: CES).
- Close co-operation between crèches, schools and social services which are expected to be set up in these centres.
- Genuine integration with the neighbourhood.
- Attractive environment in the centre (water, sand, greenery, animals and scope for further facilities, etc.).
- Maximum mixture of children of the same age group.
- Team of educators to be multidisciplinary and mixed.
- Participation of parents.

The originality of these centres is that they foreshadow a "maison des enfants" ("children's house") which though occupied temporarily by the children would be their own centre, and also that it offers the possibility of contacts and meetings and would operate on different lines.

The integration projects so far attempted by municipalities or supported by the central decision-making bodies in France have held aloof from this idea by eliminating all the collective, multidisciplinary and local aspects of the project, just as they have "forgotten" to ensure continuity, by-pass the present stratified pattern of administration and challenge the suitability of certain government departments for their present supervisory role.

To cater for the initial well-being of their citizens, new cities have been set up in the vicinity of a number of urban centres in order to create new autonomous urban areas to counter the cancerous spread of the suburbs which always remain outside the cultural, political and social movements in the urban centre. These new towns are of medium size and regard themselves as new living centres offering their citizens a home, employment and an independent social and cultural life. A number of other areas have provided centres in which care facilities are combined with medical and preventive treatment and even leisure pursuits. Imposing socio-cultural units have consequently been built in the light of the ascertained needs of specific categories of users (young people, parents, educators, etc.).

1. Some examples of "integrated" projects

a) The "educationalisation" of the infant sector

In response to the real difficulties which parents experience in coping with the incredible fragmentation of the services dealing with early childhood, a number of experiments are being made to tackle the problems involved, particularly by integrating the various services in one single area. This move,which may be justified from a functional standpoint,has taken advantage of a functional deficiency (i.e. the compartmentalisation of the different bodies dealing with early childhood and the antagonism between them) in order to build up an organised co-ordinated and well-structured power strategy to promote the action of a particular sector or service. Where, for example, it is proposed to combine the crèche, the infant school, the primary school and the leisure centre for purposes of convenience, the projected combination (the complete range of the available services) may appear helpful and convenient to the users. This is normally the case, for emphasis is generally laid on making the premises economically efficient by using them at hours when they are not being used for children(1).

However, an analysis of this functional utility shows that it conceals a number of more far-reaching considerations.

Let us, for example, consider the project centred at Bleue, which is a small but expanding town (with a growing industry which

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1) In certain cases, for example, there are plans to set up a temporary child-minding centre in connection with leisure schemes for adults.

employs about 35 per cent of the active population). What are the practical intentions behind this project?

A square-shaped, inter-connecting structure includes a series of services, i.e. the crèche, an infant school and a number of primary schools. It represents a compulsory continuous process with progressive education in classes of the same age-group and carefully defined contacts. Certain areas are programmed to be jointly used by the older children of the infant school and the younger children of the primary school. More than any other factor, this progression by age-groups and what might be called "socialisation apprenticeship" ("socialisation pédagogique") predetermines the whole operation, the whole logic and the whole strategy.

This will be seen from the principles of integration of the project programme. Despite the intention to set up a single institution and not a series of juxtaposed services, the "major functions" concept is still retained. But this procedure is really based on a number of preconceived ideas about the stages of development through which children pass between 0 and approximately 10 years of age. For example, it is assumed that up to about 18 months the functions which call for attention are basically health, care and rest. This is the vegetative stage which precedes the "major periods" of life and might be summed up as the period of educational latency. But from the stage of 3 to 5 years, the predominant factors are play and work; from 5 to 7 years, work, play and learning, and this culminates in the concept of "school activities" between the ages of 9 and 11.

As will be seen, this pattern is not only an ideological process (or manifestation). On the contrary, it emerges as the reflection of a balance of power strategy and, in this particular case, an education-centred outlook ("pédagocentrisme") around which other services, which are to some extent embellishments, are organised as well as may be in the slots authorised by educational logic(1).

In these circumstances, the organisation of floor space will be a practical reflection of the responses required to meet the need for "educational continuity". From this angle, the teaching services as a whole are in opposition to the service sectors (reception, administration, canteen, accommodation). And this spatial organisation will itself strictly determine the territoriality of each of the teams which will occupy its part of the terrain. Any meeting between

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1) The general reference here is to institutions concerned either with classes of the same age-group or with activities outside the purview of the Ministry of Education. The Ministry concedes them a place at its side but gradually whittles away the specific status they have been assigned. For example, the educational games organised from the age of 18 months gradually tend to draw children at an increasingly early age into a learning process.

the teams is conceived as an improvement in the conditions of daily life (an exercise in good neighbourliness) and never as a living, evolving interaction. Innovations are never conceived as anything other than internal, each party remaining within its own "discipline". The principal of the centre will, of course, form a college and the actual management of the centre will be in the hands of our educational advisor, recognised by the others, and more especially responsible for "inaugurating" the services.

This is a typical panoptic conception, i.e. the teaching body itself will act as an organising eye and a centre from which other powers are allocated (Foucault, 1976b). We do not believe that this represents any distortion or malevolence on the part of the Ministry of Education. Considered in greater depth, it is a process or attitude which represents a particular power complex at a particular moment in history(1).

The procedure used, which is generally significant of the logic at work, is to ensure the co-operation (at the highest level) of the officials responsible for the bodies collaborating in the project. This means that their action is bound to be based on macro-political considerations which are crystallised and solidified in institutional power relationships and frozen into a pre-established pattern of shared responsibilities.

Another policy has its point of departure in the actual practice of people and groups and aims at a collective development of local micro-policies likely to generate reforms and readjustments in the relations between the subjects and the places in which they live and work, i.e. a form of collective management of daily living.

Co-ordination is generally governed by the same considerations, i.e. the sharing of powers and consequently the sharing of separate territories which have an order of procedure. In the Bleue project it is the educational adviser who is responsible for co-ordination, i.e. basically the univocal distribution of powers and responsibilities in the existing institutional complex.

In conclusion it may be said that this project is a definite reflection of the teacher-centred outlook ("pédagocentrisme") which is likely to try to expand by annexing a number of differentiated services. We feel that this tendency is characteristic of the present trend, i.e. subordination to the teaching function which determines and predetermines the actual content, operation and logic of the institutional complex.

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1) The establishment of non-denominational, compulsory primary education has really generated a new form of state intervention. It is probable that the concomitance of these two factors partly explains the very special nature of the power wielded by the Ministry of Education and its unchanging regulation. See in this connection the work of Anne Querrien, in "Recherches" No.23, (June 1976).

b) The tendency to totalise community life in the institutions

The approach may be seen from an analysis of a number of centrally-decided integration experiments. The process is comparatively simple: the first step is to list a series of socially agreed-upon requirements, i.e. which are essentially "coded" on the basis of social utility and defined by each of the segments of power; the second step is to translate them into the corresponding institutional terms. This approach, which may at first sight appear to be a good solution, ends up, as we have seen, by literally ossifying a current situation, perpetuating the status quo and closing the door to any possibility of change.

At Latérite, for example, an integrated complex is planned which might well illustrate what we are saying. An absolutely complete range of services is being planned to respond to social demand, i.e. a mixed crèche of 60 beds of conventional type and 20 experimental places (designed to meet what is known as "atypical" demand, i.e. occasional care in cases of emergency, part-time care, care in the case of short illnesses, placements), a family crèche, an infant school with 5 classes, a primary school with 10 classes, a leisure centre associated with the school (Centre de loisirs associé à l'école, CLAE) consisting of a maternal centre and a primary centre, an all-purpose medico-social centre, a joint centre housing the information services, a co-ordinating medical and pedagogic service, joint ancillary services (nursery, management, kitchen, canteen, laundry, workshops, staff premises, etc.). The CLAE centres cater for children outside school hours. There are very few centres of this kind, i.e. closely linked to a school. For the time being they represent attempts to "educationalise" the children's leisure. A branch of the Sauvegarde de l'Enfance is also being built nearby.

This complex, which is very complete and whose functional nature is obvious, represents what we will call the "totalisation of community life" in the institutions. A study of the early childhood sector will show that practically all recorded "needs" (family-type or collective-type care and emergency care) are covered. This said, if the so-called flexible solutions are considered, e.g. the experimental crèche, it will be seen that there is a risk of a more extensive and normative type of categorisation which will really restrict irreducible demands to the response which the services can provide. In this experimental crèche, for example, it is planned to take in children (we are voluntarily using this term) "pending their placement" and to put children "of special character" under observation or try out any other scheme initiated by the teaching body. It is therefore not so much an emergency centre as an observation centre, a social laboratory in the actual sense of the word.

The extension of this totalising tendency on the part of the social services which precisely throw their main emphasis on schemes "in favour of early childhood" can now be investigated. One assumption might be that the educationalisation whose effects we have described above consolidates their validity.

A study of the Latérite programme or the very similar Gentiane programme makes it very clear that the utilitarian purpose of a complex of this kind is merely a derived, secondary result of this policy. The undisguised intention is to create a medical-pedagogical-cultural continuum to take over children from their birth to the age of twelve.

Let us consider the local contexts. At Gentiane the neighbourhood in which the early childhood centre is to be located is characterised by a large concentration of "families from poor or under-privileged social categories". It is also the locality which has the largest number of children under 6 years of age in the urban community considered. At Latérite the "centre medico-socio-educatif" (medical-social-educational centre) will be situated on the border between two neighbourhoods in the "priority urbanisation zone"(1) which is to have 7,500 units of accommodation for a young population.

These environments are considered in advance to suffer from deficiencies and to be in need of "massive" action to socialise the children, educate the parents by associating them as closely as possible with the schemes for young children and increase the number of welfare workers and the points from which they can operate.

c) A few conclusions

The object of all these experiments or projects is therefore:

1) To standardise action and co-ordinate the various objectives previously pursued through a wide range of disciplines, i.e. medicine, welfare work, mental health and education

Hence the co-ordination and co-operation between teams and services and the derestriction of case files which are so frequently mentioned in integration projects(2).

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1) Zone à Urbaniser par Priorité. The ZUPs contain less expensive types of housing. They are dormitory cities characterised by overcrowding and, at the same time, isolation,as there are no facilities for leisure pursuits.

2) And which building projects endeavour to facilitate at their level, e.g. use of the square-shaped, inter-connecting structure in planning integration of specific and common areas and provision of covered passages "to be used as an access from the parking lots and pedestrian walks and converge towards the centre. This is the living artery irrigating the complex. It is a practical reflection of the desire for integration on which the plans for the Centre have been based" (Gentiane project).

As we see it, this co-ordination arises from the new outlook which has developed in the procedure adopted by the different sectors and may be summed up by the term "prevention". This is not to be confused with preventive action against certain very specific "social evils" but is a process designed to impose discipline and specific codes of conduct in all aspects of social life.

This is what is actually implied in the growing number of special disciplines and social workers. But the result is the development of standardised practices so that any procedure for which there is no mass demand is suspect and calls for investigation and intervention by authority.

Not unsurprisingly this type of policy does not yield the expected results. A little girl died of ill-treatment from her parents in the Département du Nord some months ago after investigating welfare officials had reported favourably on her family environment. The child was "well cared for" and the flat was tidy. We are not criticising the practices adopted by welfare officials but merely quoting a concrete example of the way in which this process of imposing a standard code of conduct operates and its unsuitability as a method of accounting for the factors in a situation. The problems with which people have to cope in their lives cannot be met by any stereotyped solution from a range of pre-established schemes. They cannot be reduced to a fixed "demand" grid for which there are specific responses. On the contrary, the currents and cross-currents actuating individuals and groups must be allowed to emerge so that ultimately they can be collectively controlled by the community. This is the political objective of genuine social management.

ii) The creation of new infant ghettos

In order to realise this vision of a standardised social order the first step is to carry out what might be called grouping operations. The Latérite centre will be designed to meet the following objectives:

- "ensure a continuous, flexible, rich and reassuring educational environment for children from their birth to the age of 12 and avoid discontinuity in terms of time, location and personnel.
- achieve responsible and continuous co-operation between parents, educators, welfare workers and health officials designed to take complete charge of children in every aspect of their development and at every period in their lives (family, education, leisure) with a view to the harmonious development of their personality and the prevention of handicaps." (1) (Not a word of the foregoing is invented)

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1) The underlinings are our own.

The child is indeed taken over completely, locked into a compact network of specific institutions run by specialists responsible for every aspect of his body and soul at every moment of his life. And for what objective? To avoid handicaps. And so the child is assigned a status and enclosed in a given space over a given period of time. A truly laudable humanitarian enterprise!

This downright mania for prevention (against what?) hinges on a massive array of facilities and welfare workers operating in a range of institutions. At Latérite a new type of PMI centre (Protection Maternelle et Infantile) covers practically all services concerned with young children and their families (mental health, preventive medicine proper, vaccinations, school hygiene, family planning, etc.).

This total responsibility for all aspects of life is designed to standardise the objectives and "ultimately eliminate the disequilibria observed in the major housing estates at the childhood, pre-adolescent and adolescent stage."

At Latérite, again, a second line of action is designed to maintain young children within a reinforced family structure supported by a wide range of welfare facilities. Arrangements have accordingly been made to comfort and reassure children whose mothers are at work (maternage sécurisant). This type of action is a feature of "prevention in its widest sense". The idea is simple: if the mother is at work the child is bound to be deprived of maternal affection and this will give rise to disorders which may involve further dangers, if preventive action is not taken. Even the word "predelinquence" has been mentioned!

In this way social pressure is exercised to promote a closed and very highly responsible family pattern. The child's horizons will be bounded by the family and the institution and its world will consist solely of parents and educators.

The Gentiane project provides for temporary mini-crèches on the ground floor of each block of flats. There is a continuous toboggan from the F3(1) to the crèche; no more strolling or loitering. Even activities are codified. For example, cycling tracks are provided but their function is normative, i.e. they are intended to inculcate the highway code. At Stella there are plans for setting up three creativity workshops where children can invent a system of urban signs and signals at their own level.

This manufactured infantilisation - one would be tempted to call it desocialisation - does not stop short at the stifling of the children's libido for it directly impinges on another sector, i.e. the family, which also has a privileged place in this policy.

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1) F3: low-rent accommodation consisting of three rooms. F4s comprise four rooms, and so on.

iii) Promoting parent co-operation

The assignment of children to specific premises, the ever closer investigation of their behaviour and the systematic process of early detection covering all aspects of community life tend to give the parents the predominant role in intervention. Emphasis is everywhere laid on the need for their co-operation. At Latérite there are plans for associating the parents with the work of the institutions in the preliminary stage and part of the full-time use of the facilities. Subsequently a more didactic and interventionist policy will be adopted to sensitise the public and integrate the educational structure more effectively with the local environment.

The parents who are already mobilised by the media now find themselves vested with new powers to "manufacture good children" but under conditions of constant subordination to the specialists. The process is as follows: "we will show you how to play your part as parents and will support you in your actions". This "action" determines the behaviour of the parents and frequently has a very unnerving effect on them. In the course of a recent broadcast a number of American specialists on early childhood answered questions from French parents. The questions all centred around accidents and their prevention. People seem to be haunted by the obsession that they might "do the wrong thing" and cause an accident and it must be said that they are actively encouraged in this obsession by the specialists. At "Entretiens de Bichat" in 1976 parents were advised to keep children away from kitchens and bathrooms because of the risk of accidents!

The incompetence felt by parents is thus increased and extended to more and more sectors and activities. The idealised image of good parents is as inaccessible as that of good social workers. Nevertheless the participation of parents is the cornerstone of the whole system of integrated and totalised intervention and without it there is no true standardisation.

This parental contribution also offers a definite economic advantage as it is essentially unpaid. But a representative from Quebec considered that the paid work of a woman in outside employment was largely equivalert to the unpaid work she did in looking after her child. In his view the two "alternative options" had an equivalent overall economic value. Is the family the highest form of voluntary work? It is a question worth asking.

iv) Management

Last but not least are the management problems. To integrate, reorganise and stimulate the system an integrated form of management might have seemed essential. This is the only way in which the regulations could have been overhauled and a new approach devised which would have made it possible to reach out beyond the logic of standardisation and provide for the individual socio-cultural libido.

But strangely enough the public authorities, after a phase of enthusiasm, have returned to a separate form of management. Their motives are simple and as we have already said are due to the co-existence of separate authorities, closely interlocked but nevertheless antagonistic, i.e. health, education, the social services, adult briefing schemes, etc. In the countries which have made the greatest strides in integration, i.e. Scandinavia, Britain or America, this antagonism between territorialised authorities continues to exist.

In these circumstances the only changes can come from a shift in macroscopic balance of power relationships, i.e. by the increasing subordination of groups and teams considered in their specificity and originality. If funds are not used to reshape the subjective attitudes of individuals or groups it may be taken for granted that nothing can really change and in particular the groups and teams concerned will have no real control over the functioning of the institutions.

2. An attempt at planned "social management"

a) The Susannah Centre

A consideration of these integration projects might, however, suggest that closer association in terms of space, for example, and even limited co-ordination could, despite everything, facilitate an attempt at team work and an effort to operate on other lines and perhaps to make contact with the users, i.e. the children.

We were able to visit an integrated centre at Susannah and follow some of the vicissitudes in its history. We feel that the discussions we had with the leading figures concerned and what we learnt of its history and slow development provide sufficient data to enable us to ponder over the experiment and learn some of its lessons.

i) Basic ideas

After trying out an experimental school the municipality endeavoured to find an original way of integrating its early and intermediate childhood services. The main options may be summarised as follows:

1. Management by the users: the centre was designed to be managed by an association to ensure that everybody really was concerned in its operation and that it was geared as closely as possible to the requirements of the people of

Susannah, which is a suburb of a provincial city with a working- and middle-class population.

2. It is an integrated centre set up to operate on experimental lines. Integration was intended to be the result of concerted action by the users' association exercising its authority on the operation of the centre. In this way it was felt that any disputes or differences of opinion could be settled. This role of arbitration between the various "categories" of personnel (and problems) was to be the cornerstone of the experiment. It should be noted that the association represented not only the users but also the other parties associated with it, i.e. the municipality and the bodies which supplied the funds (Caisse d'Allocations Familiales, Fonds d'Intervention Culturelle).
This mode of operation was intended to eliminate compartmentalisation, particularly in the case of the children who spend nearly 12 hours a day in the institution, and provide a meeting place for the adults (social centre) and the children.

ii) Description of the centre

It is an integrated scheme comprising a traditional social centre (largely for adult activities with a number of workshops), a temporary custodial care centre (for children from 3 months to 5 years which is open to the children of the neighbourhood and operates in the morning and evening as a care centre for the infant school), an infant school and a PMI branch for infants at the nursing stage.

The restaurant operates under the supervision of an infant teacher and two women attendants for the children from the infant school and those from the crèche. The restaurant is pleasant, with little round tables and armchairs in two sizes (children, adults) and is actually an all-purpose area which can be used for meals, mid-afternoon refreshments and meetings.

The temporary custodial care centre, which is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., takes children from 3 months to 5 years of age (for five children it is used as a full-time crèche). It closes for one month. Furthermore, it is also used outside school hours by children from the infant school: 65 families out of 140 with children at the infant school use the services of the crèche in addition to the families which make use of it temporarily. The custodial care centre has its own premises, i.e. two rooms, cloakrooms and changing facilities, and uses the school restroom when it is available, e.g. on Wednesdays and in the evenings. The school children who arrive at 7 a.m. have their breakfast in the custodial care centre between

7 and 8.30 a.m. and this makes it possible to speak to the parents, etc.

The infant school can accommodate 140 children. It has three well-designed classrooms and an all-purpose room (rest or gymnastics). There are also a number of very small rooms used either for music or as workshops or "available areas". All the classrooms have mezzanines and stairways which can be turned to account in many ways (huts can be built under the stairs, the recesses and nooks used for silent periods and the stairs used for climbing exercises).

The PMI service is open only for a few hours a week and may be conceived as an extension of the premises. Generally speaking, relations with the PMI service seem to be quite unconstrained.

Adult activities: several workshops are designed for adults and adolescents (photography, carpentry, etc.) but here, as everywhere else, there are complaints that attendance is not regular enough. It has therefore been decided to make the early childhood sector accessible to the adults for briefing and stimulation.

iii) Difficulties

Difficulties arose very early on.

- The architectural design

First, in connection with the buildings themselves. The municipality wanted the architectural design to enable the centre to operate entirely as originally conceived or at least to facilitate such operation. However, the firm of architects was very traditional and, among other objections, was unwilling to work with the users (users' association and infant school inspector). Another group of student architects had ideas which were closer to the wishes of the promoting group but were not legally able to take responsibility for the project. Finally a solution was reached and the student architects worked under the direction of the traditional firm. The result is fairly successful, the rooms have open partitions which in many cases are not too high for the children, with the possibility of dark corners, quiet nooks, communicating passages and open workshops which can be partitioned off. Generally speaking the construction is fairly uncomplicated and the children appeared, at the time of the visit, to feel at home in the whole area.

- The scheme considered as an educational experiment

A preliminary difficulty arose when the municipality wanted to register the infant school as experimental. The inspector was opposed to this. The consequences were manifold:

As the school was not overtly experimental, the teachers were appointed by seniority including those who were opposed to experimental areas of the Susannah type. Since the headmistress of the infant school was herself very active, she therefore found herself from the start heading a heterogeneous group of teachers with all the misunderstanding and even antagonism which this involved within the team. It is essential that the teachers appointed to this kind of school should be volunteers, familiar with the project(1).

The second problem concerns what is known as the educational perimeter. There is a rule in France that two children from the same family should attend the same school. In the minds of its promoters, the rule was probably intended to spare parents too much travelling. At Susannah there is no primary school and the children gradually drain away from the infant school to follow their elder brothers and sisters. This runs counter to the original principle of contact with the local environment. If an exception could be made to this "school perimeter" rule (such is the terminology of the Ministry of Education) it would enable this difficulty to be overcome and help the school to be integrated into the neighbourhood, at least for parents who made the request.

- Inter-team tasks

This was the point at which the major difficulties emerged. It was at this level that the "territorial antagonism" we have referred to took concrete shape. To understand this, a few additional details are necessary.

The social centre which is run by the association was managed by a former welfare official in charge of maladjusted children. Her working procedure was probably not entirely suitable for an experiment that was slightly out of the ordinary. An authoritarian relationship was established at the outset and the collective agreement she immediately imposed was the same as that of certain non-social centre staff (and which incidentally was very advantageous in terms of training leave). Antagonisms very rapidly arose in connection with these differences in status as each category of staff continued to be responsible to its own administration (the teachers were subordinate to the Ministry of Education and the staff of the centre to the users' association). Some of the antagonism developed out of differences in remuneration (the teachers considered it intolerable, according to the mayor, to be paid less than the staff running the

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1) A second difficulty arose from the policy of the National Union of Primary School Teachers which is opposed to the appointment of volunteers and makes its opposition felt. This form of union corporatism goes hand in hand with officialdom in constituting a powerful brake on any sort of change in the monolithic front formed by the Ministry of Education.

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adult briefing schemes at the social centre)(1).

Subsequently, a number of organisational difficulties arose. During the short school holidays around All Saints Day the temporary care centre was expected to take in children from the infant school which was closed for holidays. In the view of the municipality this was essential to working mothers but the persons in charge of this centre were among the staff doing a holiday training course and the centre was therefore not available.

The conflicts grew sharper, each "category" clinging to what it felt was its due and refusing to step outside its own functions and do anything to eliminate compartmentalisation. (For example, children were exclusively looked after in the temporary custodial care centre premises after school hours, with the occasional exception of the infants' rest room for the infants. This seems preposterous if the institution is to operate on multi-purpose lines with an extension of the space available to the children as designed in the initial project.)

The children were therefore compartmentalised, the adults from different compartments did not speak to one another, the institution was divided up into strictly defined areas, objects could not be shifted from one place to another, doors were closed and cupboards were "out of bounds" after teaching hours.

The situation was clearly back to the traditional manner of operating. In some of its minor details it became nothing short of a caricature. Each department bought its own scrubbing powder and floor cloths which continued to be stored in two different places and could not be removed from their territory even if there was danger of a flood "next door". The paradox here was that all cleaning materials were bought from the same funds! The status quo was jealously guarded. But in this kind of trench warfare it is not only the supply lines which suffer: grand strategy is also affected.

In the circumstances nothing could be done even on a long-term basis to ensure versatile teamwork. Everybody operated within the framework of his own institution, oblivious of the fact that change always comes at points of contact and in areas where people meet and where problems develop as a challenge to the stereotyped procedures inherited by the younger generation.

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1) In this connection it should be noted that there is a certain tendency, particularly among the teachers, to overlook the question of working hours. It should be borne in mind that a teacher works 6 hours a day and approximately 150 days a year. It is therefore not always possible to compare nominal remunerations. Where the nominal salary is the same, kindergarten staff are paid less than teachers when working schedules are taken into consideration. However, at Susannah a further antagonism arose between the two categories of staff: the teachers were unwilling to be responsible for about 40 children while the crèche staff for example only had 10 (Ministry of Health).

The respective teams withdrew into their shells and avoided one another except when there was a grand showdown of the "assembly type" with each side digging itself in and the gap steadily widening between them. Despite the fact that the head teacher of the infant school is a very outgoing person she was obliged to stand on her principles and defend her team. On the other side, too, all contacts ceased.

A further factor which carried no little weight was the interplay of policy problems but these were not always clearly stated or perceived. The idea of assigning such a large centre (with a considerable operating budget) to the direct management of an association is attractive. It is intended to give the local public the means to transform its dreams of a better environment into terms of reality.

But in the French socio-cultural context community or associative life is practically non-existent and the undertaking was therefore a risky one. There again, the difficulty seems to have been underestimated, for it called for a joint, in-depth approach, a kind of "pre-management" study. An operation of this kind cannot be improvised any more than a policy for the elimination of compartmentalisation. It must be approached as a continuous process where each stage has to be thought out, re-evaluated and remodelled.

Because the users' association seems to have become bogged down in endless arguments over the status of the personnel, the experiment finally had to be wound up. It was only very slowly brought back to life wher the municipality decided to assert its authority.

Without wishing to take sides in this matter we feel at first sight that there are certain forms of French political life that give pride of place to the "major principles" (which are defended, analysed and interpreted) to the detriment of pragmatic attempts to open up other prospects, and in so doing they tend to inhibit any kind of experiment(1).

A further step was taken when the municipality decided to set its hand to the task. It dismissed the manager of the social centre, decided that any new personnel should be paid by the municipality and called upon the personnel to choose between control of the centre by the municipality or the creation of a new association. At the present time there is a new association which pays part of the personnel. The former association still exists to pay the other section of the personnel but no longer has a management board. It is clear that not all the problems have been solved.

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1) For example, a debate on procedure which may appear pragmatic and even apolitical may nevertheless enable the policy or union problems which an experiment of this kind naturally entails to be dealt with at their specific level. Our queries therefore relate to the way in which the process of politicisation works rather than to its content.

About March 1976 when a new manager was appointed, contacts were tentatively resumed. Two-way traffic began again in the corridors, the teams held a number of meetings on procedure, a new approach was made to the problem of jointly used areas and periods of time, and interchangeability.

This is the stage at which the experiment has now arrived but wounds have not yet been healed in certain quarters and resentment still remains. It has taken a year of groping and crisis to get the operation back on the track.

Would it not be possible to reverse the procedure? Instead of programming institutional facilities, even the most "rewarding", would it not be better if action could be based on the groups concerned? On the basis of their practical experience the groups could suggest experiments and be given the ways and means to carry them out. In the case of Susannah this would have settled the problem of voluntary staff, the team problem and probably the community relationships problem. In any case, this is our working assumption(1).

b) Finding our bearings

What conclusions can we draw from these attempts at integration and from the Susannah experiment?

The following points might help us focus our ideas and refresh our memories.

1. The methods practised by each sector (education, health and leisure) are the very substance of the specific forms of action catering for children and users.
2. Attempts at integration set out to amalgamate these methods but do not go to the roots of the differences between them, whereby each form of action reflects a specific authority.
3. The Susannah experiment goes to show that if the pre-financing required to set up a team is not forthcoming, the groups existing side by side are bound to find it increasingly difficult to adjust to each other. It will

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1) In the case of a project at Albane, the CERFI had programmed a "day hospital" (a centre for the maternal care and treatment of mentally deficient young infants) and planned to link it to other sectors of the infant centre in which the hospital was established. However, on the eve of the inauguration, the head of the infant-juvenile-psychiatric sector insisted on establishing special if not exclusive relations between the day hospital and the other similar psychiatric services to the detriment of its relations with the infant centre for normal children. This move was designed to safeguard one particular authority which set out to re-compartmentalise an institution which had originally been intended as an area where different types of children could mix and a wide range of experience discussed in order to gain new insights into "psychiatric care".

take some time before the conditions in which they can meet and subsequently work together gradually emerge, and the readjustments in the intervening period will often be painful.

4. If experiments are to be made with children to evolve new settings for their development, it ought to be possible to consider starting from ongoing experiments in which groups or teams have planned their future activities together, and to work out the necessary financial and legal arrangements.

This is the only way we can ensure that community living will not be equated with the level of public services available and that experiments can flourish.

C. AN OUTLINE OF COMMUNITY PRACTICES

1. Approaches

All kinds of studies denouncing the evils of over-centralised control and the single-track approach in connection with childhood have been published and there has been some follow-up in certain cases. For example, the new French legislation on crèches, published in the "Journal Officiel" dated 5 November 1975, provides for some relaxation in operating rules and for some freedom of action at the local level within the actual teams, although in strictly defined circumstances. "Responsibility" nevertheless lies with the crèche doctors, who tend to be "substitutes" for the former central authorities. Even so, it has to be acknowledged that this relaxation has gradually come about as a result of the methods already being practised by groups and local teams. This new development is not just an instance of centralised authority easing its grip. A new balance of power was slowly established between 1973 and 1975, when crèche personnel tried to open up a breach in the edifice and committed what Michel Foucault has called "illegalisms" by stretching the letter of the law. Since their efforts often led to very promising changes in outlook (such as the mixing of age groups), the outcome was a revived interest in crèches, particularly on the part of people in social categories which had hitherto not had access to them. These people were chiefly from the middle classes, such as teachers, middle management grades and technical personnel on whom the "achievements" of psychology appear to have had the greatest impact. This is especially true of the arguments in favour of the early "socialisation" of young children - which to some extent enables these groups of users to assuage their guilt feelings at leaving their children behind - and the arguments advocating an "active" community life, which is a very common demand of young couples who live a considerable distance from their families and can no longer provide their young children with a complex "social environment" (even though population statistics "prove" the existence of family links, the fact is that this phenomenon still exists). Hence a new demand emerged, coinciding with a certain tendency to open up the existing institutions, which had hitherto functioned along the lines of hospitals or public health services and had been closed to the outside world, with a complete compartmentalisation of the disciplines involved. This was a period when crèches were bubbling over with creative ideas, when there was a kind of social effervescence - with meetings, parents coming into crèches, children being taken on outings and holidays and groups of women getting to know each other - and when people exchanged ideas, met each other and talked to each other.

However, as we have already said, this did not represent a fundamental challenge to the centralised workings of the French bureaucratic system. The process was accordingly reversed and, from being a potential breeding-ground for change, innovation and collective management, it took on a normative character. For instance, the much-lauded new legislation on crèches took its cue from the "results" of a number of experiments and "suggested" that age barriers be broken down in all crèches so as to enable children to develop more fully, that crèches be more self-administering, and so on. A fresh blow had been struck for "scientific truth" and it became gospel. The problem was again placed in a normative context and was couched in terms of efficiency, yields and competition between children. "If you bring children into a social environment at an earlier age, you will obtain better scholastic results, you will have no handicaps and the children will not turn into delinquents"(1). Crèches which had been tightly closed and run on strictly compartmentalised lines switched over, without any transition, from their hospital-like confinement to an intense learning environment. A constant stream of educational games which children were expected to learn was introduced at a brisk pace. Activities were increasingly designed to give children a grounding in skills, the staff continually made themselves out to be specialists who were answerable to nobody, communication between parents and staff broke down and experienced practitioners found themselves at cross-purposes and on different

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1) This type of deep-seated prejudice is very common in France. On a television programme in which I took part and which showed some of the public-run crèches that have wrought far-reaching changes in the conventional system, one could see naked children playing without any apparent compulsion. A large number of viewers and even people working in crèches voiced their doubts and disapproval and thought that since the children "enjoyed too much freedom", they might become maladjusted or even delinquents when they grew older.

wave-lengths. There were occasions at meetings organised in crèches when parents were most anxious to know what toys they ought to buy to make sure that their children would learn "like they did at the crèche", as if there were not a moment to lose.

Unfortunately, attitudes of this kind are still very prevalent when children start attending the "école maternelle". From the way such schools are run in France, however, they are among the world's most narrowly scholastic systems, notwithstanding their untarnished international reputation(1).

This only goes to show that one of the aspects of the utterances which the authorities make - regardless of whether they are situated at the central or local levels or are of a medical, educational or psychological nature - is that they are instrumental in forcing back the issues into the norm, be it a newly created norm, whenever the opportunity arises. This is especially the case in that, as a rule, actual ranking superiors such as doctors are largely responsible for handing down these utterances to crèches and other institutions catering for children at the local level. The fact of the matter is that, in France, the right of young children and mothers to independent and separate lives goes largely unacknowledged and is generally contested. The powerful movement of psychiatrists and pediatricians who have largely "engineered" the PMI infrastructure since the Second World War and have given it its psychological bias still find cause for regret in the fact that women have to go out to work and they usually pose the problems of childhood in the exclusive terms of the universal and unique mother-and-child relationship that is solely capable of "saving" children.

So far, we have attempted to show how childhood normalisation systems function. In the forest of rules and regulations which inhibit the action of all the people and groups dealing with small children, there is little hope, as matters stand at present, of the

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1) Regardless of whether all activity is subordinated to learning the codes or semiotic signs of written language (for instance drawings have to consist of outlines on a given surface which must not be exceeded) to the detriment of the plastic forms of expression afforded by gesture and contact, or whether activity is confined to learning "generally acceptable" social roles. Children really start to internalise and experience the traditional aspects of sexual differentiation at the "école maternelle" (girls only play with girls and boys "bully" girls and "attack" them, to borrow the language of children). In other words, from the "école maternelle" onwards, children learn to recognise and accept the domination of the young males, failing which they are rejected or regarded as "maladjusted". In this connection, see the remarkable study by Mme. A. Michel, "L'Egalite professionelle et socialisation différentielle des sexes", published by CORDES in April 1975, and the article by Liane Mozère on Mme. Michel's study, entitled "Les crèches et la différenciation sexuelle", in Recherches Economiques et Sociales - CORDES, January 1977.

authorities making any sweeping changes at any level whatsoever. Our only feeling is that an experimental approach is needed if independent groups or teams working in official or other institutions are to succeed in devising actual styles for working and living which would consequently demonstrate in practical terms the need for genuine collective administration and the forms it could take. A "show of strength" of this sort would certainly not amount to a revolutionary upheaval in government or in primary principles. It would bring about a change in the pattern of investment and the involvement of groups in the early childhood sector which could give rise to other dispositions and processes and to a form of community management and living.

2. A few concrete examples

We shall take a number of examples which all stem from the research into early childhood we have been conducting in the CERFI since 1972. Our action has always been based on meetings with personnel, encounter groups and the two-way flow of ideas. For instance, our written comments on a number of individual crèches were read through and recast by the local teams working in them, and the drafting itself was even a joint effort in some cases.

At this stage, therefore, we shall merely present a brief description of the experiments where, in one connection or another, a specific approach has been adopted in every instance in an attempt to break away from the normalisation which the French institutional system inevitably tends to generate.

We feel that it would be interesting to describe these experiments because they are the illustration of a method or process designed to bring about change and they accordingly pave the way for "something different", even though they have their limitations. They serve as pointers or lines of approach which we would like to cite as examples.

a) "Marginal" or leftists' experiments

Following the sweeping changes which were ushered in by the events of May 1968 in France, a number of trial ventures were launched in an endeavour to update and give real substance to experiments in day-to-day living which aimed at breaking away from the confinement and isolation of the family system. Working completely outside the official circuits as far as operating arrangements and above all financial support were concerned, groups of men and women (whether or not parents) took on the task of creating settings for children and adults living in a community life-style. The idea was to give the child the freedom it was denied in the hospital-like atmosphere of crèches or similar institutions and by the natural or day-mother in the family environment. The usual practice was for adults to take turns on duty, while parents contributed "in kind" by providing their services and expenses were defrayed in roughly equal shares.

The main beneficiaries of this exercise were slightly older children in the 18-month - 2-year age-group, whereas babies were largely forgotten (as is often the case) in this great "cultural revolution". Clashes gradually began to occur, in particular between parents and "permanents". Just like the Kinderläden in Berlin, the experiment is the reflection of the positions adults adopt towards children rather than with children in their libidinal mobility. However, an irreversible movement was taking place. The family, as the one unchanging reference value, could no longer be taken as gospel. The authorities tried to intervene but they were ill-advised in their attempts to impose prohibitions or controls, owing to the scandalous shortage of day-care facilities for small children(1).

However, the movement of May 1968 began to run out of steam and above all split up into isolated "mini-units" which, after the manner of rural or urban communities, gradually formed living units that withdrew into themselves, clinging to their political line and to their very often difficult and precarious existence. It was undoubtedly this factor which caused such ventures to withdraw into their shells and to take up the family pattern of living again, whereas their impact and significance would have been quite different had the political circumstances not been what they were. At the present time, there are still a large number of these "marginal" experiments which fend for themselves as best they can. However, since there is no contact between them and they do not form a network, they have given rise to a host of isolated experiments which have only succeeded at best in creating a vague "extended family" and at worst a common ideological attitude to their children. In most of

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1) The authorities generally intervened in connection with health and safety standards: for instance, "negotiations" on these matters took place between the representatives of the "unofficial" crèche at the Paris Ecole des Beaux Arts, which was the pioneer in the field, and the local health and social authorities. There were instances elsewhere, in connection with similar matters, when the authorities showed that they were "over-sensitive" to everything they were not instrumental in creating and did not therefore control. The latest set of crèche regulations was promulgated in November 1975. In the covering circular signed by Mme. S. Veil, the Minister of Health, emphasis is laid in the conclusions on the need to pay attention to any experiments which might be conducted outside the norm. Perhaps this is an expensive way of partly responding to the demand for facilities for young children.

these cases a leftish family attitude with a proprietary interest in the children is growing up and this is coupled with a no less overt temptation to indulge in educational experiments and psychoanalysis. If these experiments are not to be completely robbed of the features which gave them their strength and originality, it seems urgent to provide them with the means to link up with each other and to form a living network, precisely so that they create points of impact for other policies and other opportunities for issue-raising. The fact remains that their existence has provided the basis for a whole new exercise in issue-raising and for a possible new strategy situated at and beyond the limits of existing institutions, whose values they are challenging. All the experiments referred to below owe the existence of this new situation to them and we believe that it is now possible to make these marginal experiments operational again so that they produce a new and effective form of experimentation and action, provided they are liberated once and for all from the pernicious family attitudes lying in wait for all of us. (In this connection, see our comments on family work, which could be quite relevant to their case.)(1)

b) Teamwork and settings for living

The experiment at the Pont Blanc crèche at Aubervilliers, which we have followed up for nearly five years, clearly illustrates at its level the slow but sure progress which can be made through a genuinely libidinal group investment as a group constituent and a metabolisation of the individual and group energies involved(2). From a variety of assorted elements which, at the outset, were not necessarily destined to blend together, the team was gradually able to create a life-style of its own and an adult-and-child setting which was not merely a copy of family life or a pre-school apprenticeship system. At the beginning, the crèche had a woman director who was very dynamic and highly motivated, although she was very inflexible. She "took advantage" of the measure of freedom which people

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1) Other types of family groupings forming a kind of mutual-aid club for parents in the middle-grade executive category who are responsive to psychology are also expanding. In such cases a young woman is paid to look after a group of children in one of the homes. Since the family is no longer called into question - the arrangement is on the borderline between domestic help and family life - the authorities will undoubtedly regard it as being the most worthwhile, even to the point of financing it. However, the community alibi barely disguises the fact that it is a system where families overprotect their children.

2) The detailed history of this crèche (over a 6-year period) will be found in No.27 of "Recherches", Paris, April 1977, Editions CERFI.

in charge of crèches were given after 1968, discovering militant trade unionism in her first encounter with crèche personnel on an equal footing. She participated in discussion groups under the direction of a psycho-analyst. She set out to put an end to the isolation and inactivity of the children, to mobilise the adults and to prevail upon them to shake off the lethargy of "antiseptic" child-care. It was not easy for her, and the personnel showed some reluctance, since they were accustomed to taking orders and refusing to perform extra duties. Putting more effort into the job, sitting on the floor with the children, carrying them about, taking them out, playing with them, and so on, all meant more work. When the personnel objected, she "took advantage" of her position to impose the reforms. Then a violent crisis suddenly blew up over "spanking", which revealed that there were serious differences of opinion between some of the members of the staff and the principal, who had not noticed the overt repression going on daily and the survival of retrograde attitudes in the form of spanking, conventional child-care and the refusal of adults to question their own behaviour. From the time of this crisis in February 1973, there was a striking turn of the tide and a far-reaching change in working methods and in the extent to which the staff working at the crèche became involved. The principal, who by then knew who her allies were among the personnel, took the presence of the CERFI research team as a pretext for introducing such innovations as the removal of age-group barriers, the wholesale admission of parents into the crèche, the interchangeability of personnel duties and the free movement of children. This last-mentioned innovation took on increasing proportions to the point where, in 1976-77, the children walked around naked, were not required to participate in any particular kind of activity but could adopt their own pace and could choose the adults with whom they wanted to live out their experiences. In France, a situation such as this is so uncommon as to warrant our calling attention to it. However, the remarkable thing is that the principal gradually withdrew into the background and left the personnel, who took matters in hand, to organise their work and life. The new living atmosphere they created appeared to bear little relation to that of a crèche. The principal left but the (by then) mature team stayed on by itself for more than a year, during which time it defended its life-style and working methods. With the arrival of the new principal, the personnel continued to develop the embryo community life they had experienced and learnt together. This is not a fairy tale, nor is the crèche a model of its kind. It is merely the story of an experiment which only became what it was through the long, covert and unconscious effort involved in building up the structure of a group metabolism and in blending libidinal, social and cultural energies.

There can be no doubt that a community life setting was created through the difficulties of adjustment people had to cope with and the changes they took upon themselves and accepted. This story is a typical example of the process involved in creating a local and differential life setting providing for the desires and potentialities of a group which does not function by taking its terms of reference from norms or from ideologically or politically imposed behaviour patterns. This only goes to show that over-sophisticated projects for integrating children's institutions, whether they emanate from the left or the right, usually under-estimate this level of effectiveness. And yet it is the only level capable of bringing about what we would be tempted to call a differential development process which takes account of the desires of the children and also of the adults who live with them and do not merely rear them, keep them occupied and force them to do things. We are not talking about American-style "permissiveness", which is ultimately one of the most effective normalisation systems of all, but about a complex pattern of conditions which were hitherto given a technical slant (through "structural" or detailed reforms) and accordingly did not enable real-life experiments to mobilise and motivate the users, i.e. the children(1), adults, neighbours, relatives, and so on.

c) The Thola experiment

The last example of an attempt to make a more community-oriented choice is that of Thola. Here again, the original circumstances were somewhat different from the conventional pattern in that they involved a young woman doctor working for the departmental PMI, a small and fast-growing town on the outskirts of a big right-wing city and a young left-wing municipal council which was bent on action. One special feature involved was the fact that a woman pediatrician friend of the PMI doctor settled in the town and together they decided to introduce a new early childhood policy. At the urging of a very dynamic local association, the municipality decided to open a crèche. The first departure from custom was that the aims of the new crèche were defined at meetings of local inhabitants who also requested the appointment of a principal likely to pursue those aims. This was quite contrary to the usual practice in the centralised French administrative system. Some people might have looked upon this approach as the idyllic picture of a situation that made a complete break with the past. However, another difficulty cropped up, as a result of the French lack of imagination in evolving community life styles and associations. In fact, the situation rapidly deteriorated and the crèche became a mere stake in the power game

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1) Including other age-groups such as young adolescents and children in the 8-10-year range.

opposing various forces which wanted to secure their "position" in the small-town community. For instance, the local association gradually began to ignore and attack the principal, although it had insisted on her being appointed in the first place. The municipality handed over responsibility for running the crèche to the family allowances administration but this proved to be a very expensive proposition (the crèche, which catered for 40 children, or one-tenth of the children in the 0-3 years age group, absorbed one-sixth of the municipal budget). The situation was untenable. Proposals were made to create a new structure which would enable a larger number of children to be accepted at the crèche. Unfortunately, this is where the interest groups began to react. The crèche personnel defended their status and their way of running the crèche, while the local association defended a position in open defiance of the municipality which had to announce publicly just before the municipal elections that it was closing the crèche and looking for other solutions. A miniature war was triggered off. The crèche was an issue in a power struggle which had nothing to do with early childhood. This fact accounts for the lack of concrete alternative proposals and the absence of collective endeavour(1).

This story illustrates the difficulties which arise when attempts are made to promote and try out new solutions which quite clearly challenge not only the privileges of the central authority but also the equally important privileges of users who, by virtue of the position they occupy in the centralised bureaucratic system, are able to devise some means of recriminating against and sabotaging any innovation. We are not suggesting that this is always so or even that the battle is completely lost at Thola. Curiously enough, however, if any experimental solution is to exist, it has to contend with some form of bureaucracy and representation. There has to be a fundamental change in outlook on the part of both the authorities and users. As a rule, political parties or representative bodies are not capable of making the clean break needed. This can only come about through attempts where the beneficiaries themselves take the decisions, make the arrangements and conduct the experiments. This is particularly the lesson to be drawn from the last municipal elections in France, where the "ecological" candidates were so successful. There may at least be some hope for genuinely local experiments on a micro-political scale, in which the express wishes

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1) A number of meetings called by the municipality were attended at the town hall by almost all the protagonists in this affair for several months. We ourselves participated, as a research team familiar with a number of experiments, but every practical proposal for a solution came to grief as a result of the adamant attitude of one or other party which was determined to cling to some particular power or compromise for fear of losing its advantage.

of people and groups will no longer be exclusively governed by the rules of the all-prevailing game of cat and mouse, between those with knowledge but no power and those with power but no knowledge.

D. A FEW QUESTIONS AND TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

We have seen how the French system continually placed the same limitations on innovation and experimentation, and the impression may have been left that this is peculiar to France or to countries with highly centralised governments. We should like to dwell very briefly here on the features which relate this type of system to what we feel to be present day early childhood policy throughout the world. We do not think, in fact, that more "liberal" policies centred more closely on the apparent defence of children's rights are immune to the criticisms we have made of the French system. The fundamental feature of the past twenty years has undoubtedly been the fierce obstinacy with which children have been beleagured, encircled and taken over. A host of experts are treading the road of childhood, knowledge is piling up, information is being compiled and classified, and children are being scrutinised and tracked down in a climate of normality and conformity that is more refined and efficient each day. Thus, the first piece of information we need from the countries is the number of adults who are engaged, in one capacity or another, in "dealing with" early childhood. If statistics were available together with detailed descriptions of the types of early childhood activities that are being conducted, it would be possible, in an initial stage, to evaluate the scale of the phenomenon and the directions in which it is developing.

A second dimension arising out of this initial approach is concerned with the question of women. If we examine matters more closely, we shall see that France is, all things considered, in a situation unlike that of many other countries in that it has not been content with "half-measures". In spite of recent trends (particularly in the United States - OECD), most developed countries have a low proportion of working women with children under the age of three. In France, 48 per cent of working women have children under that age. In other countries, the problem has been solved without ever having been raised. This is where the entire issue of family work takes on its full significance. How can the difficulty women experience in giving expression to their "social being" be overcome if the problem of looking after small children has not been solved? Here again, it is precisely in the "sophisticated" English-speaking and Scandinavian countries that psychology and psychoanalysis have carved out for themselves unassailable empires from the family system, and they generally allow little scope for the development of systems which would encourage women to work and enable children to develop an independent life-style without having to march in step with the mother and the family in general. It could be assumed that it is apparently possible for pre-school systems in those countries to be less "rigid" than they are in France, for instance, because the inevitability or necessity of the family system has already been argued out, accepted and embodied in the behaviour of families and children. The second question we should accordingly like to put to the countries is as follows: to what extent do you make it possible for women to go out to work, what specific types of reception facilities do you provide for young children and (on the basis of a behaviour study or a survey of child-care methods) to what extent are those facilities accepted (i.e. do they give rise to guilt feelings or not, are parents "free" to participate, etc.)?

Last but not least, what is the situation with regard to genuinely alternative approaches that are not merely a reflection of ordinary normalisation patterns and practices or of a "balanced" development between the demands of social insertion (which are very close to the economic return) and the systematic detection of deviations from the norm? In the designed, managed and normalised world that is offered to children and adults, are there any solutions - which we would gladly call "ecological" - taking account of the wishes of children and adults, of experimentation and of the remarkable potentialities of individuals and groups? At Igloolik in the land of the Eskimos (who, for the moment, are "Canadian"), the inhabitants have given the school the name of a mythical ogress who devoured her children so as to survive. Can we, as children and adults, lead any other kind of life? Hence our question is: what are the original forms of community life involving adults and children which are not governed by the demands of education or social insertion? What modes of existence do these experiments have? What factors determine their operation, recruitment and development?

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VI

THE PLEA FOR CO-ORDINATION OF SERVICES TO YOUNG CHILDREN

by

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A. INTRODUCTION

"Services for young children must be better co-ordinated." This popular position has been enthusiastically endorsed in many countries by many people in a variety of positions - parents, social workers, doctors, teachers, legislators, local and national level administrators of service delivery networks, and more.

"Attempts to co-ordinate services for young children are seldom successful." Researchers and analysts have found that in all the same places that co-ordination is so popular, co-ordination programs repeatedly fail amid widespread frustration.

In this report we explore the route from the first of these themes to the second. We begin by examining the heterogeneous sources of the plea for co-ordination. These are seldom made wholly explicit, even by active advocates. But their qualities and their number have broad implications for the eventual outcomes of co-ordination programs. Next we consider the ways in which these pleas for help are translated into practice, policies, and programs. In some cases, the tacit, unacknowledged nature of advocates' motivations interferes with the development of sensible remedies. In other cases the very problems that prompt the call for co-ordination make it difficult to create workable programs. Thus, we argue, the design of remedies is often addressed to a misrepresentation of the original problem. In Section D we survey the consequences of these distorted or inarticulate pleas and the faulty transitions from problem to solution. Here we discover some of the reasons why co-ordination programs have had such disappointing outcomes. We conclude with cautionary lessons for would-be co-ordinators.

B. SOURCES OF THE PLEA FOR CO-ORDINATION

Successful initiatives for policy change do not spring unsolicited from the void. Co-ordination policies, like all others, emerge from particular concerns of influential participants in the process of policy-making for children. What is remarkable in this case is how many diverse "particular concerns" seem to lead to advocacy of increased co-ordination as the solution. Indeed this unusual degree of convergence on a policy direction has made co-ordination the dominant strategy for improving services in many countries. Clients, professional practitioners, administrators, planners, and politicians may each want to see more co-ordination in the delivery of services, each group for its own reasons, from the vantage point of its own positions. Any general movement toward co-ordination is likely to be an amalgam of the various motivations and definitions of the problem that these groups bring to their advocacy. It is often difficult to clarify and separate these motivations, and therefore difficult to understand just what problems co-ordination is expected to alleviate. In this section we address the sources of co-ordination reform to discover what motivates the plea.

Some pleas for co-ordination grow out of administrative efficiency concerns. The staggering number of agencies, the multiple sources of funding, the elaborate division of labor among agencies and among professions, the overlapping lines of authority deriving from local, regional, and national administration of policy for children - all contribute to a felt need for order and rationality. Co-ordination is often sought as the key to rationalize the disorder of duplication and overlap. The diversity of child care programs under different auspices with a variety of sources of funding led the U.S. government in 1968 to create a program for "Community Co-ordinated Child Care" (4C) (Steiner, 1976). Somehow it simply seemed sensible for assorted day care agencies to share in purchasing equipment and supplies, training staff, and hiring specialists.

The seeming rationality of the solution may even be invoked in cases where no problem has been identified. In Finset's (1978) account of policy for young children in Norway, he reports a number of initiatives at the national and municipal levels for improved co-ordination - among the Ministry for Church Affairs and Education and the Ministry for Consumer Affairs and Government Administration and a Government Commission on Youth Policies at the national level and among the Child Welfare Committees, the Kindergarten Committees, the School Boards, Health Councils, and Cultural Boards at the municipal level. But in no case was it clear that there were any existing failures to co-ordinate that needed to be corrected. In fact much successful informal co-operation was present. As in the 4C case, the justification seemed to rest on no more than the unthinking supposition that more co-ordination could only be a good thing.

But an inchoate longing for control and certainty in a disorderly environment is too vague an explanation for the enormous amount of attention now being devoted to co-ordination. Our reading of the literature suggests that more concrete circumstances often evoke the argument that more co-ordination is desirable. In this section we will discuss seven such sources:

1. The sense of working at cross-purposes,
2. Perceived overlap and duplication of coverage,
3. Gaps or discontinuities in available services,
4. Felt need for comprehensive or holistic treatment for clients,
5. Frustration with limited service technologies,
6. Clients' desires for more resources, and
7. Political and organizational needs for reform and control.

Not all motivations are present in any case of co-ordination advocacy, but neither are they mutually exclusive. The seven are discussed here to illuminate not only the diverse motives behind the call for co-ordination but also to explain in part why the call is sounded so frequently. If any of these situations can be translated into a demand for co-ordination programs, the world-wide clamor is easier to understand.

1. Cross-purposes

Co-ordination is called upon to solve the problem of agencies or policies that are working at cross-purposes.

For example, a welfare department case worker urges a young mother to go out and seek a job to become economically independent and offers some kind of assistance in doing so. Meanwhile a school attendance officer more concerned with children than the mother urges the mother to stay at home and take care of the children in order to further their education or to help them keep out of trouble. There are fundamental conflicts in these two sources of pressure upon the parent, and the advice from the two agencies is to some extent irreconcilable. When this kind of push-pull pressure arises, as often occurs when several agencies impinge upon a multi-problem family at once, some kind of co-ordinated or integrated case conference may be called upon to negotiate the competing positions and to offer unified guidance to the family.

In the late 1960s, in the United States, different kinds of child-care programs flourished in the federal bureaucracy. The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), the spearhead anti-poverty agency, viewed child-care primarily as one way to promote community control because local communities had an interest in managing their own child-care services. In contrast, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) viewed child-care as a strategy to encourage adult welfare recipients to enter the labor force, in the hope that increasing employment of female heads of families would decrease welfare costs. The 1967 amendments to the Social Security Act instructed OEO and HEW to co-ordinate day-care programs in the hope that the agencies could establish a common set of program standards, regulations, and objectives (Steiner, 1976).

The belief that the activities of government nullify each other and undermine family life has led to sentiment in favor of a national family policy in the United States and many other Western countries. This presumes that, with co-ordination, shared purposes can be discovered and that underlying allegiance to common ends can overcome the cross-purposes that characterize present agency practice.

2. Duplication

Another experience that can lead to the call for co-ordination comes when people and policies seem to be doing the same thing. Because of the patchy, cumulative nature of legislation and agency creation over the past five or six decades, it is by no means uncommon to find nominal service functions replicated again and again across different funding sources and agencies. For example, at a time when the United States tried in vain to pass two national day-care bills, one could find already on the books some 23 different provisions for day-care. The housing, health, labor, military, education, and other sectors were independently financing day-care for pre-school children, although the amount of day-care that was in fact provided is relatively unknown.

The experience of duplication at the federal level is readily translated to counterpart experiences at a local level. Individual service providers involved with a child or family may find themselves competing to administer nearly identical services. Such experiences naturally raise questions about the cause of these redundant authorizations and agencies. Of course, the redundancy may be more apparent than real. A careful analysis of the meaning of "same" and "different" when one deals with human services would suggest that the case for redundancy is overstated. It is difficult to categorize accurately either the nature of problems or the nature of services offered in a practical world to a whole child and a child's whole family. Nevertheless overlap offends our sense of order and efficiency.

3. Gaps and Discontinuities

Agency policies are often premised on the belief that effective delivery of services involves a flow or continuing process. Gaps or discontinuities in the flow thus interfere with achievement of therapeutic goals. One kind of gap occurs when services offered to young children at one age are felt to be ineffective because those services are not maintained during later stages of children's development. An obvious example is the creation of a pre-school program for children aged three to four in a community that lacks kindergarten programs for its five-to-six-year-olds. There is thus a disruptive gap between pre-school programs and elementary education.

Some clear-cut examples of co-ordination designed to fill gaps are found in the policy statement of the Cheshire Central Consultative Committee for the Pre-School Child and Family. "Although full day care is provided for the pre-school child, as soon as he/she becomes of school age then day care ceases. A child of 4 years 8 months can have full day care. A child of 4 years 10 months may well become a latchkey child. From the foregoing it can be seen that there must be a considerable amount of joint local planning to ensure that the roles of the Education Service and the Social Services department are complementary to each other." Another gap is to be filled by co-ordination among children's departments and education and health agencies: "For many years the day nursery was regarded as an agency primarily concerned with the physical care of children. Recently more attention has been given to their emotional and educational needs, but the lack of teachers in day nurseries hinders the development of a good educational programme." The expertise of several agencies is deemed necessary to produce "a combined effort of care and education."

Discontinuities may be equally effective in prompting a call for relief in the form of co-ordination. The effects of pre-school programs may be wiped out by primary schools that actively or passively contradict the lessons taught earlier. Discontinuity may arise when school teachers act against some of the freedom or creativity allowed to children in the pre-school years. The benefits of a high quality elementary education should not be interrupted by requiring that children pass through a rigid or discriminatory junior high school system.

4. Felt Need for Comprehensiveness

Service providers often believe that only simultaneous multiple interventions will alleviate the problems of a family beset by multiple ills. A comprehensive program of care may be required if the child of such a family is to derive benefits from any one service. It is a common experience to feel that one cannot deal with an education problem unless there are simultaneous improvements in the family's treatment of the child or in the child's health.

The perception of missing pieces of service may be inflated by the wistful belief that more comprehensive approaches might help the child. If this is true for individual children, it has been overwhelmingly true for groups of children who are in trouble. The many specialized agencies to serve disadvantaged children with medical care, recreation, emotional guidance, education, and income support have not been able to concert their efforts effectively. This problem did not appear to be duplication of each others' services, nor were there serious gaps in available services, nor did the agencies work at cross-purposes. Rather the problem was a failure of timing; services did not reach the child when they were required. In crowded urban service sectors, overlapping agency mandates have made it difficult to determine who is responsible for a given child. If services were orchestrated, co-ordination advocates assert, a more harmonious blending of effort would naturally follow. Thus co-ordination is believed to cure discontinuity.

5. Limits of Technology in the Human Services

A critical but far less obvious source of pressure for co-ordination arises from the limited efficacy of the human service professions. The roles of the human services are grounded in the human sciences and these are, as everyone knows, weak in stipulating the regularities and predictions necessary for successful engineering. Human service professionals deal with people in grief or pain, with abused or neglected children, with the crises of the human spirit that attack the weak, the aged, the infirm of any society. Their main business is to help other people adapt, develop, and adjust to the complexities, inequities, and uncertainties of modern life. We cannot assume that these service occupations are equivalent to occupations that operate on things. We cannot assume that failure betokens a lack of effort, that more resources will lead to more output, that division of labor will increase efficiency. The knowledge base of these professions is too fragile to support such assumptions. Professionals and administrators alike are placed in the immensely frustrating position of trying without necessarily succeeding, of investing more resources without necessarily operating any successfully, of expanding and specializing only to feel dissatisfied that the parts somehow do not add up to a whole.

The limited efficacy of the human service occupations may lead to calls for co-ordination in two ways. First, at the level of practice, practitioners experience a measure of grief in being a "whole child professional." Sitting on uncertain scientific competence, it is their everyday experience to encounter pain and suffering that they do not know exactly how to fix. A professional may call for "co-ordination" because she feels that the service she provides is inadequate to the human problem that she is charged with solving. Second, at higher levels of management, a manager may use traditional assumptions about the synthesis of occupational roles in her address to the human service professions. If social problems persist, there is a natural tendency to believe that either more resources or better co-ordination of activities will more effectively attack the problem. While managers are held responsible for making the system work, they are frustrated by the constraints placed upon them in fulfilling their responsibilities. Faced with severe resource constraints, their impulse is to cast about for ways to do more while spending less. As a result co-ordination is frequently seized upon as a primary management strategy.

It is convenient for practitioners and administrators to reinterpret their problems as failures of co-ordination. Concerns over their inadequate performance are difficult to acknowledge to themselves, much less to the world. Facing up to a persistent lack of technological competence would mean admitting to their clients, their funding sources, and their professional peers that they may not be able to do their jobs. It is far preferable to admit to the lesser sin of administrative disorder.

Each of the five motivations for co-ordination that we have discussed thus far - the sense of working at cross-purposes, duplication of services, gaps and discontinuities in the flow of services, felt need for comprehensiveness, and limits on service technologies - must be interpreted as an hypothesis that better co-ordination will eliminate or alleviate each of these five conditions. Some rearrangement of services would produce a critical mass or a critical conjunction or permit a disentangling that would create or allow more effective treatment of children's problems.

These arguments for co-ordination are based on plausible but hypothetical assumptions about the workings of the service network and they all make some untested critical leaps: the problems in service delivery are simply organizational; the system is made up of efficacious laborers each with a contribution to make to children and family well-being; no important competence is missing from the system. Therefore if each unit can be properly co-ordinated with all the others, the problems of gaps, fragmentation, cross-purposes and the like will be neatly erased. As should be obvious from articulating these unspoken assumptions, they are occasionally correct but also are occasionally far from the mark.

Each of the five may thus represent a correct or an incorrect hypothesis about the appropriateness of a co-ordination solution to a problem. Another characteristic of each of these five sources is that each may represent a direct practice worry or a detached calculation. The various participants in the service delivery system frequently experience the need for co-ordination in different ways. For example, a professional's sense of working at cross-purposes with another agency may be an infuriating emotional experience that may lead her to plead for co-ordination to avert mutual interference. But that is quite a different matter from a planner who extrapolates the likely impact of several social policies, detects potential contradictions, and rationally proposes co-ordination to smooth over the incipient conflicts.

The "hot knowledge" of the practitioner is first-hand, the result of primary encounters with children. The "cold knowledge" of administration is more remote from children's pain; it belongs to those who manage services at a distance. Some hypotheses about the benefits of co-ordination seem to be motivated by hot knowledge, by direct emotion, passion, and anger. Others seem to come from cold knowledge, from reason, analysis, and controlled concern. In our example, a sense of working at cross-purposes may emerge out of hot or cold knowledge, and either may lead the policy-maker to hope that better co-ordination will be a solution to her problem. But the plea for co-ordination takes a different sound and shape when it originates in hot knowledge compared to cold - it is less orderly, less articulate, more unruly, more emotional. A given situation may provoke either or both types of pleas simultaneously, and the hot/cold distinction cross-cuts the five sources of pleas that we have outlined. Even the fifth, the limited technology of the service professions, may either be experienced out of personal dismay and frustration or discovered in the process of analysis and calculation. Understanding the difference between them helps clarify some of the independent springs from which co-ordination programs bubble up(1).

The last two factors we discuss represent a somewhat different leap of faith from problem to solution. In the case of clients on the one hand and legislators and general purpose government officials on the other hand, co-ordination is invoked as a tactical path to fundamental on-going concerns. These concerns - more services for clients and more power and influence for politicians - are not susceptible to solution once and for all, nor is co-ordination seen by its advocates as more than a temporary means for short-term progress toward the desired end.

6. Clients' Demands for More Resources

Families receiving social services have a primary interest in getting adequate help when they need it. As one survey summarized its findings: "In the main, those who saw a need for change in the

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1) We do not intend to suggest that hot and cold modes of knowing are mutually exclusive. We present them here as a rough dichotomy, but they may shade into each other and each into other modes of cognition as well.

service system perceived available services and personnel to be in short supply and wanted essentially more of the same. What comes through is more a feeling of service shortage rather than duplications or gaps." (Baum and Coleman, 1976).

Clients may see co-ordination programs as one path to achieve these goals. When budgetary constraints foreclose the possibility of new programs or more staff, clients may support co-ordinating efforts as a way to sustain social or organizational momentum toward more effective service delivery for children. The increased efficiency assumed to result from co-ordination may be seen as a way to generate more resources to devote to service delivery. Melo (1977) documents a case in the city of Coventry where public demands for improved pre-school facilities played some role in the establishment of co-ordinating councils that included social services, health, and education officials. The comprehensiveness emphasis in many co-ordination programs may also appeal to clients, either for the sake of improvements in the number or variety of services available or for the convenience of co-location or improved access and intake. A variety of client needs may lead parents and families to advocate co-ordination - not necessarily for its own sake but as a route to improved services.

7. Political and Bureaucratic Needs for Reform

Co-ordination (like other kinds of reorganization) can become a tool in straightforward power struggles over control, priorities, or resources within the social service system. Naturally, each group with a stake in how social services are organized is interested in co-ordination linkages that operate to its own relative advantage. Naturally, these ideas about appropriate and effective co-ordination conflict (Seidman, 1970). Conflicts among any combination of interested parties over control of service priorities may be acted out in the arena of co-ordination reform, each group trying to impose its vision of a better-run system on all other groups. Gardner (1976) among others discusses the battles between general government acting as co-ordinator and the entrenched categorical interest groups and service professionals: "Line agencies, their legislative allies, and associated interest groups frequently resist any administrative services integration changes which may decrease the importance of categorical program managers ... Their resistance is wholly predictable, for categorical interests are usually fighting in their own territory which generalists invade with some proposed intervention and then move on to new priorities in other areas." (p.27)

Sometimes these conflicts are really over questions of co-ordination. Other times co-ordination reform is simply a way to fight other battles. The organizational changes involved in most co-ordination plans offer opportunities for shifts in control over many aspects of organizational life. The political nature of the funding decisions provides interested parties with ways to enter into these power struggles. The result is that co-ordination becomes more than an administrative issue, more than a professional issue. It is embedded in political issues and becomes a political issue in its own right. As Seidman (1970) writes: "Organizational arrangements tend to give some interests, some perspectives, more effective access to those with decision-making authority." (p.14)

Lynn (1976) provides a good example of political motivations in his analysis of the attempted co-ordination of all social services in the state of Florida. A confluence of political forces on the state legislators led them to impose a massive unwanted reorganization on the service delivery agencies in the state. Most potent of these forces were the political fashion of accusing large bureaucracies of incompetence and the allure of programs that claim to improve the quality of care within existing budgets. One net effect of the mandated service integration was to remove some control over the huge Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services budget from the state governor and his appointees and to give it to the legislature's oversight committees.

A strategy of co-ordination often has symbolic political implications which are as important as if not more important than the content of the co-ordination initiative.(1) In this case, as in the others, the expression of pro-coordination sentiment by political officials may be driven by no more than the play for political advantage.

C. TRANSLATING PLEAS INTO REMEDIES

As our seven categories illustrate, the plea for co-ordination can come from a remarkable variety of sources, and may take many forms. When co-ordination programs are proposed by diverse constituencies to fill many different needs, it becomes a complicated matter to translate the theory into administrative and professional practice.

First, a pro-coordination coalition may have multiple goals for co-ordination and integration programs. Under the rubric of co-ordination reformers hope to achieve increased efficiency, accessibility, accountability, advocacy, comprehensiveness, participation and numerous other objectives. While all of these are worthy goals, they are by no means the same thing and different objectives may well imply contradictory courses of action in any given instance. For example, setting up a co-ordination program to eliminate overlap in no way

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1) The symbolic appeal of co-ordination is frequently potent. An extended analysis of the causes and consequences of the potency may be found in Weiss (1978).

guarantees a co-ordination program that improves the comprehensiveness of services provided to children. To the extent that a co-ordination reform attempts to accomplish inconsistent tasks, the reformers may be unable to achieve any of them. The vague hypotheses that co-ordination will be effective often camouflage the multiple, conflicting hopes that parents, politicians, administrators, professionals, service providers, and interest groups impose on the program. The result is persistent lack of both consensus and clarity over what the program is supposed to accomplish.

Even when the ostensible goals are agreed upon, a second sort of confusion often disrupts efforts at effective reform. One must translate one's goals into specific proposals for change. In a social system as complex as a network of social service delivery organizations, knowing where you want to go does not mean that you know just how to get there. Eliminating fragmentation and discontinuity is a highly desirable goal but there are many possible ways to attack it, and no very good way to know which is most likely to work. In the reigning ignorance and confusion, administrators often put into place specific administrative changes that do not have much connection to their long-term goals. That is, they try methods of attacking their objectives that turn out to be ineffective or irrelevant.

Consider an example. A superintendent of a school district in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was disturbed by the incidence of functional illiteracy in school drop-outs in low-income areas of the city (Philadelphia Alliance, 1974). He decided that a climate of mental health could be created within schools by bringing mental health specialists to work in the school system. These specialists were to provide screening, consultation with teachers, and some direct service. Co-ordination between them and the teachers seemed to be the crucial requirement for altering the climate in the schools. But what remains obscure is how such linkages would in fact reduce the problem of illiteracy or lower school drop-out rates in the ghetto schools. There is not much logical congruence between the initial professional concern about illiteracy and drop-outs and the "solution"of co-ordinating mental health specialists and teachers. The hypothesis that co-ordination would solve his problem clearly rested on faulty premises.

Administrators may know just what they want to accomplish but, because of constraints of resources or constraints of inadequate knowledge or technology about how to effect desired change, they may not be able to accomplish it.

Co-ordination reforms must be implemented in complex settings with the participation of a number of interested parties with stakes in the outcomes of the reforms. To the extent that the parties fail to understand their own and each other's motives, they may fail to participate effectively, they may be angered at having their expectations violated, or they may end up working at cross-purposes. In any case, effective reform will be difficult to achieve.

The problems of clarity are exacerbated by the difficulties of translating hot knowledge into cold. There is a gap between the passion and emotion experienced as hot knowledge, and the cognition and rationalizations embodied in cold knowledge. There can be serious distortions in communicating across the gap. The feelings of outrage, empathy, and grief aroused in those who deal with young children in trouble may make it difficult to deal rationally or articulately with service delivery problems. The pain of clients and practitioners does not travel very far in the networks of administration, planning, or analysis. The wires of such formal communication systems carry only translations, imperfect as they inevitably are, of that hot knowledge into cold. Such flawed renditions of the source of the plea can only make it harder to target a remedy appropriate to the malady.

Thus the many sources of co-ordination advocacy and the nature of those sources create problems in the design of operating programs capable of curing the offending symptoms. The tacit nature of the motivations and the many constituencies who may be mobilized make it hard to understand just what drives the plea for co-ordination in any given instance. This fuzziness obscures central questions about what should be done. For example, it is possible to co-ordinate at many levels, but there is far from unanimous agreement about what type of co-ordination is most important (Rein, 1970). Some call for co-ordination of all services to specific groups of children (e.g. Brewer and Kakalik, 1979), others for co-ordination of all service delivery to families living within limited geographic areas (e.g. Gardner, 1976), others for various strategies of co-ordination at the administrative level (e.g. some contributors to the symposia reported in ASPA, 1974), still others for co-ordination by the mutual adjustment and readjustment of policies initiated by autonomous agencies, with no centralized co-ordinator (e.g. Lindblom, 1965). Unless co-ordination advocates can specify precisely the condition they hope to change, they can have little notion of what should be co-ordinated - people, facilities, policies, resources, information, control, etc. In practice, the frequent result is that co-ordination is aimed at the wrong level. Aiken et al. (1975) describe the attempts of five projects to co-ordinate services for mentally retarded children and adults. They found that each project co-ordinated at a level that was mismatched to its purposes. It is not unreasonable to suppose that such tactical errors could be avoided if programs had a firmer fix on their goals and purposes at the outset.

A final concern in the design of remedies is that the remedy will not be simply askew, it will be wholly inappropriate. There are many problems in the delivery of services to children that are not problems of co-ordination and therefore cannot be solved by improving co-ordination. There are problems of fit or congruence when client needs do not match up neatly with available services. There are problems when services are stigmatizing and the very effort to treat a child (as in special classes for the mentally retarded) exacerbates or creates the condition the treatment seeks to relieve. There are problems of high drop-out rates, where parents do not want their children to continue in programs that professionals want to provide. There are problems of professional conflicts when doctors, teachers, social workers and psychologists see the need for different sorts of treatment and each is unwilling to subordinate its concerns to alternative philosophies of treatment. There are problems of poor quality services and burned-out service providers and problems of inadequate staff resources and problems of uncertain political support for services to children and problems of shrinking budgets. But none of these is a co-ordination problem, nor should we expect co-ordination to be a broad-spectrum solution to such urgent but unrelated concerns.

Unfortunately there are many cases in which co-ordination is invoked reflexively, on the mistaken assumption that a plea for a co-ordination problem must indicate a corresponding need. When the Joint Planning Team in Britain inquired in 8 local authorities for examples of intergovernmental problems requiring improved co-ordination between local and central government, they were astonished to find that the local officials had no concrete problems to report. A county in Pennsylvania revamped their social service system to create comprehensive, integrated, and co-ordinated service delivery in the face of an internally commissioned survey concluding: "The problems associated with a need for services integration did not manifest themselves to any marked degree in our samples (of households and of active clients)... The conclusion has to be that, from this limited perspective at least, service integration attempts are quite unlikely to lead to any very great positive impact on consumers." (Baum and Coleman, 1976, p.22).

In such instances, co-ordination is unlikely to be useful. The plea for co-ordination remedies may rest on mistaken hypotheses. Our pleas notwithstanding, many problems cannot be ameliorated by a shift in organizational arrangements or an admonition to co-operate. Co-ordination is no substitute for clear, focused objectives, high quality services, or adequate resources. We squander our scarce energies when we assume that our guesses about the beneficial effects of co-ordination will always be correct.

D. CONSEQUENCES OF FAULTY TRANSLATIONS

We often find little congruence between the original practice problem and the co-ordinating mechanism that results from the plea. As we discussed in Section B, the plea for co-ordination often misrepresents its many sources and usually appears less speculative than it is. As we discussed in the preceding section, the translation of pleas into operating programs is a second source of confusion and peril, with further distortion of the original problem introduced to the process. Certainly not in all cases but in far too many, we settle on programs and practices that are badly connected to our objectives. In this section we explore the consequences of such faulty translations. We consider several: difficulties in implementing co-ordination programs because they are mismatched to their settings; unanticipated negative consequences of co-ordination programs because they are not carefully thought through; and, most tellingly, the failure to achieve our policy objectives through co-ordination.

Some of the ambiguity and confusion in the plea for co-ordination is reflected in legislation designed to establish co-ordination policy. When the formal mandate for a program provides unclear or contradictory guidance for implementors, the process of implementation is hamstrung from the start. Foltz (1975) illustrates this dilemma in the case of the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment program (EPSDT), which was designed in 1967 to be the most comprehensive child health care program the United States had ever undertaken. The failure of the initial legislation to specify how state health and welfare agencies should work together on the program led to a delay of over six years before the program could be implemented, and even then EPSDT served far fewer children with less comprehensive services than its sponsors had provided for. Another example is Orenstein's (1976) account of the state of Massachusetts' programs for handicapped children. The legislation set up multi-disciplinary teams within the school system to diagnose and provide services to handicapped children. But the team did not have the legal authority to provide or purchase all the services nor did it have jurisdictional authority over which agencies - mental health, welfare, or education - should take responsibility for a given child. The lack of clarity in the legislation in this case, as in the EPSDT case, led to delay, struggle, and sabotage in implementation together with a plunge in the morale of members of the co-ordinating teams.

A clear formal mandate is desirable, but is not in itself sufficient. Implementing co-ordination never proves to be an easy task. As students of organizational change have known for some time, the organizational procedures of service delivery agencies become entrenched, partly through the convenience of habit and partly because they are sustained by internal and external incentives. These incentives that sustain current service delivery networks are not trivial considerations. Change in and of itself has costs. It creates uncertainty; it threatens the positions of key members of the organization; it disrupts organizational effectiveness. Organizations are thus unwilling to change unless the benefits of a proposed change are perceived to outweigh the costs. Change will not occur unless the system of incentives is revised so that new operating procedures are seen as more effective, more convenient, more efficient, or more rewarding than the old. Co-ordination reformers cannot simply point out more rational ways for organizations to behave and expect them to change. Agencies must be shown that it is in their own interests to bear the costs of change. No matter what the source of the original plea for co-ordination, these organizational needs must be addressed for effective implementation to result.

The need for incentives is especially acute in inter-organizational co-ordination. Co-ordination programs usually require individual organizations to surrender some of the resources, power, or autonomy that they have traditionally controlled to other organizations or to a co-ordinator. This constitutes a cost in the usual sense of a loss of resources. But it is also costly in that it threatens the organization's basic needs for maintenance and survival. Control over resources or expertise enablesan organization to continue to function, givesit goals and boundaries and claims on additional resources that distinguish it from other organizations. One of an organization's most important objectives is to perpetuate itself. When co-ordination programs seem to jeopardize survival, either through the immediate prospect of absorbing the organization or by forcing it to give up some of its autonomy, resistance must be expected.

Just as existing organizations of service deliverers have needs, so too do the professional groups who staff these organizations and the governmental groups who pay for them. The professional service providers, as the final links in the service delivery process, are the people who must change their daily work behavior if the service delivery system is to be changed in any meaningful way. It is they who feel the primary impact and make the essential difference in attempts at system-wide reform. Those co-ordination projects that provoke the least resistance seem to accomplish that feat by setting up appropriate incentives for the professional service providers. When service providers believe that co-ordination will make it easier rather than harder to provide high quality services, professionals are much more likely to co-operate fully.

Several kinds of incentives may be offered, some more effective than others at providing help to the service providers. Co-ordination and integration programs may offer increased funding, various types of comprehensive information systems, the availability of more and more varied professional expertise, increased planning or analytical capability, or physical facilities as in a multi-service center (Montgomery, 1976; Quinn, 1976; Gans and Horton, 1975). In general, service providers tend to see money and some kinds of information as more helpful than planning or buildings (ASPA, 1974; Lucas et al., 1975). Thus co-ordination reform sweetened with the first two sets of incentives seems more likely to evoke support and co-operation from professionals than co-ordination without them. To the extent that professionals feel helped and supported by the reorganization they are likely to contribute to successful co-ordination. To the extent that they feel threatened and undermined by the reorganization, they are likely to resist. Again, regardless of the primary impulse for co-ordination reform, the concerns of professionals for quality services must be satisfied if genuine change is desired.

Implementers are equally aware that social service systems are created and paid for by governments as embodiments of political and social purposes. This political context of service delivery makes it legitimate for each group - clients, professionals, administrators, special interest groups, general purpose government officials - to pursue its own interests through co-ordination reform. Thus co-ordination, like other political issues, must be the product of compromise, bargaining, and negotiation among the power centers. Henton's (1975) data on the feasibility of implementing co-ordination linkages in 33 different settings showed that projects that were the outcome of bargaining and negotiation among interested parties were more successful in achieving co-ordination links than projects that were the result of a technical planning process. No one group, no matter how passionate its plea, could expect to impose its vision of co-ordination on all others.

All these difficulties - ambiguous legislation, organizational inertia, professionals' resistance, and political bargaining - do indeed affect dramatically the rate of successful implementation of co-ordination programs. In their detailed evaluation of 35 services integration projects, Gans and Horton (1975) found that co-ordination linkages were not common, even among the most highly regarded projects. None of the projects had fully developed a majority of the linkages that they had planned; indeed many had abandoned their plans for co-ordination in favor of an emphasis on service delivery. Lucas et al. (1975) reported a similar phenomenon. Not only did implementation fail to meet expectations, but in eight out of the forty co-ordination projects they evaluated they could not find evidence that any linkage - fiscal, personnel, locational, organizational, or administrative - had been created.

Another consequence of the unreflective adoption of co-ordination programs is programs that have not been thoroughly thought through, which then cause unanticipated and unwanted side effects. An example of such unintended effects is provided by Webb's (1975) account of the reorganization of personal social services in Britain. The so-called Seebohm reforms attempted to increase co-ordination, but resulted in actual decreases at some levels of co-ordination. The reorganization stimulated massive demand for social workers and administrators and thus made possible considerable upward mobility into the newly created senior positions that the law required. As practitioners became administrators, inexperienced workers were hired to work in the field. Even those with little experience were promoted. The result of this growth and mobility was to create a field situation in which many workers lacked training, and lacked experience and familiarity with the local area they served. This contrasted sharply with the earlier stability among workers who had acquired years of contacts from living and working for many years in the same area. According to Webb, the influx of inexperienced generalist case workers has eroded the established pattern of co-operation between doctors and social workers. In part the restructured organization of services removed the doctors from their former position at the center of the day-to-day delivery of services. In part co-operation dissipated because the inexperienced generalist social workers may have been less useful to doctors than their experienced, specialized predecessors.

Another sort of unintended consequence stems from the political context of the social services. Social services are the expression of diverse political purposes and values that must compete for scarce resources. Under such circumstances attempts at co-ordination may actually be dysfunctional (Landau, 1969). Their elimination of overlap, duplication, and waste may mean the elimination of diversity, the homogenization of services. For example, central intake and referral systems may provide clients with increased access to services but may eliminate clients' freedom of choice among treatment types or philosophies. Overlap may encourage experimentation with alternative methods of treatment, because professionals, administrators, and clients all know that traditional help is available elsewhere. By discouraging overlap, co-ordination programs may discourage innovation. As expressions of our political purposes, social services reflect the pluralistic character of those purposes. Rationalizing the system through co-ordination may destroy some of this pluralistic character (Warren, 1970). Fears of such results may motivate some of the resistance to co-ordination by clients, special interest groups, and politicians sensitive to these constituencies.

Instead of lowering costs, harmonizing the crowded service environment may reduce the rate of growth in the overall volume of resources available for children. Services proliferate as new programmatic initiatives find constituencies to support them. Coherent policy might actually reduce the extent of political support. This suggests that an adequate level of resources may require complexity and redundancy.

As we noted earlier, our hopes and concerns for children are complex, diverse, and redundant - and they are also inconsistent and contradictory. In a fragmented system these contradictions are not directly confronted and thus do not have to be resolved. Attempts to co-ordinate social services across categories may lead to the surfacing of many such inconsistencies in our social values. It may be socially useful in some ways to be made aware of the contradictory messages that our social policies convey. But there is some social danger in making these conflicts explicit in ways that provoke confrontation or sharpen divisions among segments of society. The more comprehensive the co-ordination, the more likely it is to require direct and explicit decisions about such uncomfortable trade-offs.

If co-ordination efforts are so difficult to implement and generate such undesirable secondary consequences, it should come as little surprise that their overall success rate is disappointing. Meld (1976) puts it this way: "Efforts to achieve human services integration over the past decade have not been notably successful... No organizational model has been found which demonstrates its effectiveness in achieving human services integration...despite some rhetoric to that effect...There is no evidence, for example, that cost savings and efficiencies have been accomplished. Nor can one claim significant institutional or system change...Resistances to change in the status quo of the service structure...[have a] tendency to thwart the human development potential of human services." (pp.101-103).

Systematic data on costs show that such programs almost never achieve cost reductions, and in most cases implementing the change serves to increase costs. Morrill (1976) sums up the results of DHEW's analysis of the experience. "Services integration seldom reduces costs in the short term...Services integration at the delivery level most often requires shared information systems that are often expensive." Gans and Horton (1975) conclude their analysis of 30 co-ordination projects. "Although there are some cost savings resulting from economies of scale and reduction of duplication, they do not appear (at least in the short run) to equal the input costs of administrative and core service staff required to support integrative efforts." (p.48). While most administrators claim that these are short-run increases with long-run decreases to follow, there is little evidence that direct long-run financial benefits ever materialize. Analysis of co-ordination efforts over a longer period of time in the areas of mental retardation (Aiken et al., 1975) and child care (Steiner, 1976) have shown no significant changes in efficiency. But, as Meld notes, it may be unfair to draw definitive conclusions on this point in the context of overall retrenchment in social service outlays and programs in many countries.

While costs provide a direct criterion for measuring the impact of a co-ordination program, evaluating change in the continuity, comprehensiveness, or quality of services reaching the client is far more difficult. Self-reports of client satisfaction with services are generally agreed to be an inadequate representation of quality, and this is particularly true in the case of children as clients. But there is no adequate way to evaluate the effects of co-ordination programs on service delivery. Thus there are no systematic data that show whether co-ordination makes any difference to the client. Anecdotal and impressionistic accounts of service integration and co-ordination projects show mixed results. A few projects claim to have had some positive impact; many admit that impact seems to be minimal. Depending on who does the reporting (i.e. proponents or opponents of the co-ordination plan or neutral outsiders), the same story may be told in different ways and the lack of hard data makes it difficult to judge the relative merits of the competing versions. But the sense of the literature is that few co-ordination projects have made an important contribution to client well-being. It has proven much more difficult than was generally anticipated to change the ways in which services are delivered to clients at the local level.

E. CONCLUSIONS

We have argued thus far that many diverse and not wholly consistent forces propel the advocacy of co-ordination. These forces do not translate neatly or easily into practice; in fact some of them cannot even be captured effectively in words. As a result we frequently adopt policies and programs with little relevance to our initial worries. The inevitable result is that the co-ordination programs we launch seldom satisfy our purposes. The logic of this argument suggests several ways for policy-makers to avoid this grim progression.

It is not always possible, nor is it strictly necessary for would-be co-ordinators to understand the true sources or motives for their plea for co-ordination. What does seem to matter is that policy-makers agree on what is to be co-ordinated. "Co-ordination" by itself is too vague to be a guiding principle for action. As we have shown, people want co-ordination for a variety of reasons, to address a motley set of needs. They do not all want the same thing when they ask for co-ordination. Choices must be made. Policies and programs must be aimed at improving some specific co-ordinative strategies (by client group, service function, geographical area, or whatever) even at the potential cost of less co-ordination somewhere else. Policies inevitably fail when they try to be all things to all people. When the multiple objectives of all relevant constituencies are negotiated into a focused, limited set of purposes, planners and administrators are in a much better position to create a workable program targeted appropriately.

Embedded in this last suggestion is a second recommendation - that policy-makers take seriously the claims of multiple participants in the delivery of services to children. This means that policies should accommodate the political and organizational milieu of service delivery and include provisions for responding to the needs of client, community, and interest groups with a stake in the efficacy of those services. Only through the mobilization of the joint efforts of several constituencies can sufficient energy be summoned to overcome the inertia and potential opposition to change in a complex system of services.

Our final admonition in this unromantic guide to co-ordination reform is to be skeptical about the ultimate effects of better co-ordination. There are numerous avenues for reforming services to young children, and many have no co-ordination element at all. These should not be neglected simply because co-ordination happens to be in fashion this decade. Co-ordination, as we have said, is a useful, but limited remedy. Our experience with it to date has not been wildly encouraging, and there appear to be many compelling reasons why this has been so. We do not mean to deny the obvious fact that some co-ordination programs do succeed and that many more could perform better than they have thus far. We do mean to suggest that co-ordination has been and continues to be oversold. At this point, the most productive strategy may be to discover those circumstances under which the goals of high quality, cost-effective care for children can and cannot be achieved by these types of reform.

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VII

PARENT EDUCATION
THE OPEN UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

by

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A. INTRODUCTION

In October 1977 the Open University presented for the first time two short courses for parents: The First Years of Life and The Pre-school Child. This report provides a description of the courses, why and how they were produced, and the evaluation programme that is planned.

The Open University is a unique institution within the United Kingdom which specialises in distance teaching(1). It has a well-established first degree programme, but is now in the process of developing a non-degree programme of continuing education, of which these courses are a part.

The institution may be unique, but the challenges involved in creating effective distance learning materials are by no means unique to the institution. Therefore, in principle at least, the Open University experience in producing these courses may be relevant to all those involved in parent education using distance media. The courses contain a number of innovations in approach and method, which are discussed in sections B to F. Section G provides details of costings, and section H outlines evaluation plans.

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1) The Open University is designed for adult independent learners and is open to all: there are no entry qualifications. It consists of a central core of academic and administrative staff who produce distance teaching materials which are sent directly to students' homes throughout the United Kingdom; and 13 regional offices which organise distance and face-to-face tuition and counselling by part-time staff. Since 1971 it has offered an undergraduate degree programme on a credit system, with multi-media courses produced by six Faculties. It also offers research credits for higher degrees, and a Post-Experience programme of non-degree courses. It is funded by a triennial grant from the United Kingdom Government Department of Education and Science and from student fees. Currently more than 55,000 adults are studying part-time at home with the University, and a further 15,000 have obtained B.A. degrees.

B. COURSE CHARACTERISTICS AND METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

The First Years of Life and The Pre-school Child were developed concurrently by the Community Education section of the Post-Experience Courses Unit(1) in collaboration with external agencies: the Health Education Council(2) and the Pre-school Playgroups Association(3) respectively.

Each course consists of the following elements, which are mailed or transmitted directly to students at home:

- 8 full-colour correspondence-text books (256 pages total)
- 4 25-minute television programmes
- 4 20-minute radio programmes
- 3 18-minute records
- 1 resource pack of posters, leaflets, etc.
- 4 optional computer-marked assignments leading to a "Letter of Course Completion."

In addition students have the option to join a local self-help study group, organised through the collaborating agencies. Currently also an experimental phone-in service ("Hotline") is being offered by the University, to help with study problems.

The courses are advertised and offered nationally twice a year, in October and January, at a current fee of £10. Students register by sending in a simple form (giving name, address, sex and date of birth) with their course fee. They are then sent their course package, which involves them in about five hours study per week for eight weeks.

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1) The Post-Experience Courses Unit of the Open University is currently developing a programme of non-degree courses in four areas. In-service training for teachers, Health and Social Welfare, Management Studies and Community Education. These areas form an interim experimental programme which is being offered by the Unit while the University reviews "the nature and scale of its future contribution to the national development of continuing education". It seems likely that the Post-Experience Courses Unit will soon be replaced by a Centre for Continuing Education, but that its interim programme will form the initial core of the Centre's activities. Currently all Post-Experience courses are required to be self-financing from student fees and external grants: unlike the rest of the University, the Unit is not formally covered by the Department of Education and Science triennial grant.

2) The Health Education Council acts as an advisory body and information centre on all aspects of health education; it also sponsors research and carries out campaigns. It is funded by the United Kingdom Government Department of Health, and works in co-operation with local health and education authorities.

3) The Pre-school Playgroups Association is a voluntary organisation which promotes the formation and support of playgroups, as part of the general range of services for pre-school children and their parents; and which seeks to increase public understanding of the needs of pre-school children and to help parents identify their own part in meeting these needs. It has a national head office and committees, 11 regions, 50 county associations and some 350 branch groups of playgroups.

The First Years of Life covers the period from conception to age two, while The Pre-school Child covers the period from the second to the fifth birthday. Both courses may be defined as 'functional education' i.e. intended to encourage the direct application of learning in everyday life. Clearly students can make only parts of the courses functional during the eight weeks; but it is hoped that the courses will have a longer-lasting effect by serving as a resource throughout the periods covered.

The overall aim was indeed to develop courses with a flexible format which would allow students to follow their own interests and which - to quote an early planning paper - "would equip students with the knowledge and skills to assess their own and their children's needs and take appropriate action, thus maximising opportunities for the personal development of both parents and children in these years".

Thus from the outset the interplay between course content and layout design was considered. The courses are based on a three-dimensional model which draws together student experience, knowledge themes and learning objectives (Figure 1). The model was built up as follows:

First, lists of student experiences were drawn up: for The First Years of Life of common questions and problems, grouped by age/stage of development; for The Pre-school Child of everyday situations and settings. These areas of experience formed the basis of individual 'topics' 2 to 4 pages long, which were grouped into the eight books. This approach was taken because it was felt it would be more meaningful to students to look at 'what can babies see?' or 'mealtimes' rather than to start from the conventional divisions of developmental psychology.

The second step was to plot which knowledge themes were relevant to each topic. The results of this exercise are reprinted in both courses to provide a structured index for students, allowing them access to the course materials by theme, rather than by questions or settings if they so wish.

The third step was to plot against each topic the skills to be developed in that section. This step was very important, for in planning each topic the priority was not to ask "what do we want to tell students here?" but rather "what do we want students to be able to do as a result of working on this material?" A hierarchy of learning objectives was derived from the overall aim of the courses (Figure 2), with each category being further sub-divided to give a total of thirty specific objectives. These objectives provided the third dimension of the model, and formed the basis for course exercises or 'activities' which are intended to help students analyse their own experiences and apply what they have learned. Such activities might be attitude quizzes, behavioural observations, or practical things to do.

The model was essentially a pragmatic device, used to plan the courses in outline and to check on the overall coverage of themes and objectives. Not all cells in the model are covered; and many topics include more than one cell because they cover more than one learning objective, or provide an overview of a number of themes or experiences.

The course materials thus created are learner-centred and active. (They are also interactive in the sense that some kind of 'feedback' or comment upon the exercises is nearly always provided). Each book takes up a number of knowledge themes and develops certain skills within a familiar context. But the topics are deliberately non-linear; they may be read in almost any sequence or grouping across the whole course. Topics drawing on the same theme or experience are cross-referenced, but independent. So the student may choose his/her own access strategy rather than have to follow a given sequence.

This independence of elements is repeated within individual topics also. Topics are composed of the following elements: title and introduction, main text, illustrations, one or more types of activity, and information boxes. Together these elements combine the strands of experience, knowledge and learning objectives: but each element may also be taken separately, thus again giving the student the freedom to use part or all of the particular topic.

The courses are multi-media, so at the end of the planning period certain topics were earmarked for development mainly through television, radio or records, where these were deemed to be more appropriate media than print. Television, for example, has been heavily used for the analysis of natural interactions in playgroups, clinics, and homes: radio and records have been used to explore language development. The different media are therefore complementary, and every effort has been made to integrate them. So for example a topic on 'children's questions' includes the analysis of a conversation on a record, the conversation being based on a game provided in the Resource Pack.

Finally, the courses are open to any adult in the United Kingdom. It was therefore important that the courses materials should be accessible to a wide range of literacy standards. The experience-centred approach is intended to ease the reader's identification with the course content, while the 'magazine' format of topics is meant to encourage familiar patterns of reading behaviour. The magazine style is reinforced by the extensive (50 per cent) use of full-colour illustrations for both motivational and instructional purposes; the text is written directly to the individual parent, and has good 'readability' comparable to popular mass-circulation newspapers and magazines. These features are intended to make the courses open to the target audience of parents of pre-schoolers(1); but of course not all such parents will take the courses. The public concerned with the courses is therefore discussed in the next section.

C. PUBLIC CONCERNED

The primary target audience for the courses are parents with children in the age-range for each course and, in the case of The First Years of Life, parents who are planning or expecting a child.

At any one time the number of families in the United Kingdom which fall into such categories is vast; around 2 million. Enrolments for the first two presentations, which are shown in Table 1, represent a mere 0.6 per cent of this figure; and the baseline number of students used for calculating costings amounts to only 1.5 per cent.

Table 1

STUDENT ENROLMENTS

	The First Years of Life	The Pre-school Child
First presentation (October 1977)	3038	3052
Second presentation (January 1978)	3146	3661
Total	6184	6713

Obviously it would be impossible to reach all such families, but the challenge is to reach as many as possible. The University can accept many thousands of students at any one time: the question is how to attract them, and in particular how to attract students other than the already well-educated parent. Demographic data can be used to inform recruitment strategies, and current findings and action are described below.

Demographic data is collected on the application form and by means of a Student Registration Card mailed to students as soon as they have registered. 95 per cent of all students on the first presentation returned this card, and Table 2 summarises the main demographic findings to date.

Table 2 gives total enrolments and demographic data for the 1977-78 and 1978-79 pairs of course presentations. The greatest difference is to be seen not between the courses, or between course presentations, but between 'fee-paying' and 'sponsored' students (see below).

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1) Pre-school is defined in the United Kingdom as the years before the age of five, when statutory schooling begins.

Table 2

CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS

Characteristic / Course	"Pre-school Child" fee paying students		"First Years of Life" fee paying students		"First Years of Life" sponsored students
	1977-78	1978-79	1977-78	1978-79	1978-79
Base (100%)	6764	5212	6211	2746	494
	%	%	%	%	%
1. Sex					
Male	3.0	3.6	4.5	4.8	2.3
Female	97.0	96.4	95.3	95.1	97.7
2. Age					
Under 26	5.2	6.7	11.6	11.8	30.2
26 - 35	73.9	77.4	77.4	78.3	57.6
Over 35	19.2	15.4	8.9	9.5	12.1
No information	2.1	0.1	2.3	0.3	0.1
3. Employment					
Not in paid employment	59.8	34.9	59.5	32.6	29.1
Part-time work	21.1	16.4	15.6	9.2	7.8
Full-time work	11.3	10.9	22.0	27.8	10.6
No information	7.8	37.9	13.8	30.5	52.5
4. Terminal age education					
15 or less	Not available	7.3	Not available	4.1	19.0
16		13.7		19.9	21.3
17 - 20		26.3		25.7	19.8
Over 20		34.2		43.6	10.4
Still in full-time education		0.2		0.4	0.1
No information		18.2		16.2	29.3
5. Highest qualification					
None	8.7	6.8	4.9	4.0	18.8
CSE/RSA/'O' level	30.2	25.9	25.4	20.3	32.0
Post-'O' level	12.1	11.0	12.5	23.1	4.7
Teachers cert. and beyond	41.1	38.0	50.2	48.4	14.5
No information	8.0	18.2	7.1	15.9	30.1
6. Has children					
No	4.3	4.6	8.7	12.4	2.8
No but pregnant	1.3	1.1	13.8	21.8	8.4
Yes	78.9	68.2	63.8	44.6	54.8
Yes and pregnant	7.8	8.7	7.1	5.5	5.2
No information	7.9	17.4	6.7	15.7	28.8

Source: Community Education Evaluation Group, Project Memos 20 and 21.

The findings are encouraging insofar as the courses are mainly being taken up by mothers who are pregnant and/or have children within the age ranges covered by the courses. Working mothers are finding the time to take the courses; and the courses also have an appeal to those with low, or no educational qualifications. The Student Registration Cards also revealed that 77 per cent of all students were willing to have their names and addresses released for the purpose of forming self-help study groups, which may give some indication of the potential demands for such groups.

Although the proportion of male students is very low, there are indications from the Student Registration Cards that many female students planned to share the course material with "1 or 2 other people" - which could indicate that male partners are involved. The proportion of young parents is also relatively small.

The collection of demographic data will continue throughout the life of the courses. First-presentation students are unlikely to be representative in the long term particularly as various steps are being considered which may well attract more young and unqualified parents. The normal University entry age has already been lowered from 21 to 16 for these courses, and future developments particularly concern fees and publicity.

A 14-day trial period, with money-back guarantee has been introduced so that prospective students may view the courses before committing themselves to paying the fee. This may well bring in some 'undecided' potential students. However, it is probably more often true to say that those parents for whom the fee acts as a real or perceived barrier also lack the motivation and/or confidence to study the full course alone or even in an ordinary group.

Grants from the Health Education Council and the Scottish Health Education Unit for 1000 'sponsored' places on The First Years of Life in 1978-79 have been extended to a total of 2200 places on both courses in 1979/80. It has received warm support from professionals, volunteers and students alike. Preliminary findings, such as the demographics above, suggest that the courses can indeed become accessible to a wide range of parents.

Course publicity currently takes two main forms: national advertising, and leaflets and posters distributed at the local level, as part of the collaboration. The response to the leaflet has been relatively high and the possibility of putting more effort and resources into local, word-of-mouth publicity is currently being considered. Conventional sales experience suggests that personal contact may reach those who are not touched by advertising or convert an awareness created by advertising into action. Discussions are therefore being held about ways in which the existing role of group co-ordinators might be revised to include a more active 'animateur' function.

Course publicity is currently directed towards individuals, as University regulations permit only individual registrations. However, consideration is being given to the possibility of giving potential students positive encouragement in course publicity to share the fee, and the course materials, with one or two friends. Some 15 per cent of students are now known to be sharing the course with up to 5 others. The grounds for this are not only financial, but also motivational, in the sense that a new experience can be less awesome when shared with familiar people. There is already some evidence that course books are being shared by small groups without difficulty; but the assessment option is only open to the individual who is registered. Therefore consideration is also being given to the possibility of making the course assignments separately available, so that all those sharing one set of materials may register for assessment if they so wish.

The course materials are designed to be attractive and accessible to a wide audience, and thus continuing efforts are being made to remove financial, administrative and motivational barriers to potential students. An analogy might be that enrolling for the courses should ideally be as simple, familiar and attractive a process as purchasing goods from a mail-order firm. The idea of a University selling its wares quite so vigorously is unusual, perhaps, but many other community education schemes have proved the outreach value of taking education 'out of the ivory tower and into the market-place'. Certainly commercial book and magazine publishers reach some of those who fall through the nets of conventional higher/further/adult/continuing education. But their dominant motive is profit. The use of commercial methods and techniques, adapted to serve educational principles, is relatively untried but may provide part of the key to reaching a wider public.

Current 'informal use' work includes:

- the appointment of two members of staff to cope with enquiries and support
- the development of a Uses Pack and a Display Pack to help professional and volunteer workers in their resource use of the course materials
- the compilation of a register of informal users
- the preparation of booklets based on the courses to accompany local radio and newspaper serialisations
- the preparation of a booklet based on the courses to be given via the Scottish Health Education Unit to every pregnant woman in Scotland for the International Year of the Child.

The In-service Education of Teachers (INSET) area of the Post-Experience Courses Unit has received funding from the Health Education Council for a research project into the school curriculum relevance of the courses.

The Health Education Council has also given funds to develop 13 'topics' as leaflets for distribution via Health Visitors in a pilot project currently being evaluated.

The course booklets are also being reprinted in volume form by a commercial publisher for sale in bookshops. Purchasers of the book may subsequently sign on for the rest of the course for a proportionate fee.

D. INITIATING ORGANISATIONS

The primary initiating organisation for both courses is the Open University. However, it should be stressed at the outset that both courses have been produced in collaboration with nationally-based external agencies. This section describes the organisations involved and why they came together to produce these courses.

The Open University specialises in techniques for distance teaching and learning. Its experience to date has been mainly confined to the development of an undergraduate programme for adults over 21, but a number of organisational features have emerged which are relevant to the development of these courses, viz.:

a) the development of all courses through the agency of course teams comprising academic, editorial, design, administrative and BBC staff;

b) a contract with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) for the production of all television and radio programmes;

c) an Operations Division with a full editorial and design staff to prepare print materials for production (mainly by outside printers) and a Correspondence Services section to mail them;

d) use of the national postal (Post Office) and broadcast (BBC) networks to deliver multi-media materials to large numbers of people studying in their own homes;

e) a distinctive relationship with the academic staff of other institutions for consultant authorship and assessment of course materials.

The University has gained an international reputation for its flexible undergraduate programme and the innovations it has made in creating multi-media courses designed to facilitate distance learning by mature students from a wide variety of backgrounds. However, the undergraduate programme cannot by definition fulfil the need for many other aspects of continuing education. This is recognised in the Open University charter, which states that "The objects of the University shall be...to provide education of University and professional standards for its students and to promote the educational well-being of the community generally."

The establishment of an acceptable undergraduate programme was properly seen as the first objective for the University, in order to establish its academic credibility. Now that has been achieved, the University is taking steps to develop its other responsibilities under the charter. Concurrently with the deliberations of a Committee on Continuing Education, set up in 1975, the Post-Experience Courses Unit has drawn up and begun to implement an interim experimental programme of courses in the areas of professional and community education. *The First Years of Life* and *The Pre-school Child* are part of that interim programme, being the first two courses in a proposed series of Community Education courses.

In general such courses are intended to be functional, dealing with a variety of adult life concerns, and accessible to a wide audience through their educational design. They inherit from the undergraduate programme the organisational framework and also a baseline of experience, insofar as it relates, from which to continue to exploit and develop the potential of distance teaching. Two key distinctions between Community Education and undergraduate courses, from which many others follow, might be summarised thus: the courses are intended to be learner-centred rather than subject-centred, and to be at the levels of information and personal decision-making rather than at the levels of policy and theory. Pragmatically also the courses need to appeal to large numbers of students, in order to make use of the economies of scale that are possible in distance teaching.

A further key feature of Community Education courses is that they should be collaborative with external agencies, for while the University has considerable expertise in course production, it lacks the grassroots knowledge, contacts and experience which are critical in planning an effective programme of Community Education.

The First Years of Life and *The Pre-school Child* were first discussed as collaborative projects in 1975 with the Health Education Council and the Pre-school Playgroups Association. Both organisations were keen to extend the parent education side of their work, but from rather different starting points.

The Health Education Council is a government-funded agency with much experience of leaflet and poster campaigns, many of them concerned with the health and well-being of pregnant mothers and families with young children. It was well aware of the potential of distance teaching media, and also of the limitations of campaign materials. From the Council's point of view £25,000 invested in a collaborative venture might do more to improve health than the same sum spent on other leaflets.

A number of health topics were considered for the joint course, but *The First Years of Life* was eventually chosen for three main reasons: the current climate concerning parent education (see section E); the fact that discussions were already turning towards a potential series of courses covering the "Seven Ages of Man", of which this would naturally be the first; and the fact that it would synchronise well with *The Pre-school Child* course being discussed with the Pre-school Playgroups Association.

The Pre-school Playgroups Association's interest in parent education was perhaps a natural step in the development of the

Association. With a thriving organisation based around 10,500 affiliated playgroups, most of which actively involve parents, came a demand from parents for courses both about playgroup management and also more generally about child development.

The Pre-school Playgroups Association meets the demands of its members as far as it is able; but it lacks the money for a large educational input, and is aware that there are many parents isolated in rural areas, or simply by the fact of having a young family, whom they cannot reach. Collaboration with the Open University could serve the interests not only of their Association, but of the far wider public on whose behalf they lobby.

From the University's point of view, the potential contributions of these two agencies were invaluable. The Health Education Council provided some funding, but equally importantly it offered a formal introduction to, and contacts with, health professionals, local health education officers and health centres of all kinds. The Pre-school Playgroups Association, as a voluntary organisation, could offer no financial resources, but was able to pass on its very considerable experience of parents and pre-school children, and to offer the services of its national committee network to help with course publicity and the formation of student groups. Details of how the courses were developed in collaboration are given in section F.

E. ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE COURSES

In one sense the courses arose from a timely coincidence: as indicated above, the University was looking for suitable areas in which to experiment outside the undergraduate programme - and simultaneously two agencies were interested in furthering the parent education side of their work. The collaborative production of these courses was therefore of potential benefit to all three organisations.

However, the need for more parent education is increasingly becoming a general view. For example, the United Kingdom Government Select Committee on Violence in the Family has been particularly concerned with the 'handing on' from parent to child of certain patterns of relationships, and with the potential of parent education to break this cycle. Professional bodies contacted through the Health Education Council also lend support to a 'preventive' model of parent education. And the growth since the 1950s of a number of voluntary parent organisations, such as the Pre-school Playgroups Association(1) suggests that some parents at least actively desire

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1) Also, for example: the Association for Improvements in the Maternity Services (AIMS); the National Childbirth Trust (NCT); the National Association for the Welfare of Children in Hospital (NAWCH).

a greater knowledge of pregnancy and the early years, and a greater influence over the services available to them.

The demand for more parent education is interesting, because a variety of sources already exist: some local education authorities run courses, hundreds of commercial publications are available, covering all aspects of pregnancy and child development; and several television and radio series are devoted to the subject. The support given to the Open University courses perhaps reflects two things: a feeling that existing forms of parent education were not being taken up by those most in need; and a hope that the courses might draw together all aspects of parent education in the face of the rather overwhelming diversity of existing provision.

On the former issue, the Open University has the potential to reach a wide range of parents. Whether the courses will succeed in attracting parents who are not reached by other forms of parent education is a question that can only be answered over time. Certainly every effort is being made to reach those in need.

On the latter issue, early on in course preparation several points of comparison and difference emerged quite clearly, suggesting that in sum the courses would be unique, although parts had parallels in other provisions. These points may be summarised as follows:

a) The courses are like every other distance medium (print, television, sound recordings, etc.) in that they are nationally available to students in their own homes. However, they are unusual in that they provide an integrated, multi-media package - a possibility otherwise confined to the various broadcasting networks, which, if they produce print material at all, usually do so in the form of optional, back-up material to the broadcast series.

b) The course books deliberately use a magazine format and style - but they provide a much more structured offering than most mass-circulation magazines, while still allowing the student to choose his/her own study route. Moreover, the courses integrate text, illustrations and activities, whereas other publications for design simplicity usually give words or pictures priority, and rarely use techniques of reader involvement.

c) The content and general orientation of the courses are different in a number of ways. The courses are free from the inherent bias of pressure groups or baby-product manufacturers; and they try to avoid the prescriptive stance of baby manuals. Their personal, functional approach stands in contrast to both the passive, impersonal style of textbooks which describe child development, and the 'cook-books' of practical activities which frequently lack sufficient underlying conceptual frameworks and explanations. The courses also emphasise parental relationships and feelings, rather than adopting a totally child-centred approach.

d) In addition to the course package, the courses offer the options of joining a local study group, and also of assessment. The option of assessment is a requirement of the University; yet it implies the option to fail, which poses moral problems in the context of functional courses about being a parent. Therefore assessment consists solely of simple comprehension questions and the recording of the results of course activities. It is designed to show whether students have "provided sufficient evidence of participation in the courses" to receive a Letter of Course Completion (the nearest a distance-teaching institution can get to a Certificate of Attendance). There is no grading, and students are simply told whether or not they have provided this evidence. On the whole it is hoped that students will gain sufficient intrinsic feedback from working on the courses to place the small extrinsic value of the assessment in perspective.

The Open University courses thus differ in a number of significant ways from existing forms of parent education. It is up to others to judge whether those differences merit them a substantial place in the parent education scene.

F. METHODS USED FOR PREPARING AND LAUNCHING THE COURSES

Each course was produced by a Course Team consisting of a chairman, three lecturers, a course assistant, an editor, a designer and a BBC producer. Two of the lecturers, and the course assistant, worked half-time on both courses, thereby creating a useful link between the two teams. It was also of great help to both teams that one of the chairmen was the Vice-Chancellor of the University, who supports the development of the non-degree programme.

The Course Teams met weekly to discuss plans, progress and draft course materials. In between meetings, individual team members worked on various aspects of course development in accordance with Course Team decisions. The ultimate responsibility for decisions regarding the courses rested with the teams and with the University departments and committees which serviced the courses and gave approval to proposals. However, the Community Education Section has defined four aspects of collaborative course development (see below) and in each of these decision-making was much informed by discussions with the collaborating agencies.

Course definition (May - August 1976)

The teams began their work with informal research into objectives and participant expectations. Given the overall aim of producing functional courses for parents of pre-schoolers, this work consisted mainly of:

a) reviewing knowledge and personal experiences of the most appropriate distance teaching techniques for the target audience concerned;

b) reviewing existing parent education materials and popular communications generally, with regard to principles of presentation, format and style;

c) holding discussions with people more closely involved with parents of pre-schoolers about which areas of experience to cover, and more generally what parents would want from the courses. A consultative conference was held for *The First Years of Life*, attended by representatives of a large number of agencies concerned with pregnancy and the first years, while for *The Pre-school Child* meetings were held at the national level of the Pre-school Playgroups Association.

The teams did not work directly with parents apart from some informal trials at the materials development stage. A promising line of pre-course research, which time did not permit, would probably have been an intensive 'formative testing' period, developing sample topics with a group of parents and deriving principles and objectives for the courses from that experience. This will be an aim for future courses; but it is not easy to elicit critical analysis from a target audience either during, or after course development (see section H). Therefore the method of seeking the parental viewpoint from the more analytic and critical perspective of professional and voluntary workers will be retained for future courses, as an adjunct to more systematic field testing.

In the end, the teams placed trust in their own intuitions, derived from experiences during this period, and set about developing course materials to the limits of their creativity. The basic model for planning the courses in outline was described in section B; and from this model materials were created in three draft stages.

Materials development (September 1976 - October 1977)

At the end of the course definition period the courses each consisted of some 90 topics, the objectives and content of which had been defined in great detail by the course teams. Overall, 64 external consultants - including both professors and playgroup leaders - were asked to prepare first drafts of topics which were in their specialist field. Course team members also prepared some drafts. Despite the provision of notes about activities, illustrations and writing style, the task required of consultants was sufficiently unusual for many of them to experience difficulties; and in retrospect the teams' view is that it might have been more efficient to use consultants as consultants, rather than as authors.

All first drafts were discussed by the full teams, and allocated to team members for 'transformation' into second drafts. Transformation, rather than origination of materials was the prime task of the teams, and consisted at this stage of one or more of the following: devising, clarifying and testing the activities; restructuring and simplifying text, with the aid of computerised readability measures; initiating discussions of artwork with studio illustrators and the taking of photographs by the photographic department.

Following full team discussion of the second drafts, the type was set in order to allow the academics, editor and designer to further transform each topic by preparing a first layout or 'paste-up'. Since the teams believed layout to be an integral part of the educational materials, all topic layouts were brought back for full team discussions, and simultaneously were sent to external assessors for comment. The third draft stage consisted of modifying layouts and text according to teams' and assessors' comments, and supervising the materials through all the usual proof stages with the printers. At the same time the format of the broadcasts was finalised. Like the course books, the broadcasts are rooted in everyday life, and are activity-based. And, as with the books, difficulties were experienced due to a lack of precedent in creating this type of educational material. For example, it was sometimes hard to judge how long 'freezes' should be held for observation, or how many items students could be expected to monitor in a given sequence.

Throughout the materials development period the collaboration was sustained in a number of ways. Two of the lecturers were joint appointments, and other staffing aid was given (see section G on course costs and financing); both agencies were represented on supervisory management committees for the courses; and discussion sessions were frequently held. On The Pre-school Child these consisted of meetings with a Support Group drawn from all parts of the Pre-school Playgroups Association, while on The First Years of Life informal liaison was maintained with a variety of health professionals and agencies. Such links led naturally into the third aspect of collaboration: course delivery, that is, publicity and the formation of student self-help study groups.

Course delivery (May 1977, ongoing)

Applications for the courses opened in May 1977, and advertising and publicity materials were prepared in liaison with the University Information Services department. As part of the collaboration the teams were able to seek the invaluable help of Health Education

Officers(1), and nominees of playgroup branches, with course publicity. In particular, leaflets and posters were distributed free through these channels to a wide variety of local community centres - playgroups, libraries, health clinics, etc. - attended by parents-to-be and parents of young children.

In addition, many Health Education Officers and Pre-school Playgroups Association members offered to act as voluntary co-ordinators for student self-help study groups. It was therefore possible to arrange a national network of group co-ordinators for each course, which works in this way: all students are sent a list of co-ordinators, and if they wish to join a group are invited to contact their local co-ordinator. The co-ordinator puts students who make contact in touch with other such students living nearby, and helps arrange a first meeting. No formal tuition is involved; it is simply a way of extending the self-help principle of the courses by offering students the opportunity to meet and share problems and experiences relating to the courses.

Table 3 summarises co-ordinator and self-help group activity on the first course presentation in October 1977. Data for subsequent presentations show less activity, although the trend of more groups on The Pre-school Child with its more extensive and personal co-ordinator network is maintained. Co-ordinators change from year to year, but continue to vary in how much they have to do, and how much they wish to do; this is acknowledged and accepted in the Co-ordinator Briefing Packs which have been developed.

Co-ordinators are now encouraged to play an animateur/enthusing role, especially in relation to pre-existing groups which might be interested in taking the courses. Meanwhile, further information is needed both about the reasons for the decline in group activity arranged by co-ordinators, and about the extent of pre-existing or sharing group activity which bypasses the co-ordinator system.

G. COSTS AND FINANCING

The courses are required to be self-financing from student fees and grant income(2). Since they had to be developed before enrolments (and hence fee income) were known, an obvious financial risk was involved and expenditure was closely scrutinised by various University committees.

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1) Health Education Officers are employed by Area Health Authorities and are responsible for the administration, organisation and implementation of health education within the area.
2) See footnotes 1 and 2, page 176.

Table 3

SELF-HELP GROUP ACTIVITY IN OCTOBER 1977

	"The First Years of Life"	"The Pre-school Child"
1. Students contacting co-ordinator to join group	27%	41%
2. Method of contact:		
telephone	55%	60%
letter	42%	26%
personal	1%	11%
3. Number of co-ordinators	116	284
4. Number of contacts per co-ordinator:		
average	12	5
range	0 - 45	0 - 22
5. Number of groups set up (approx)	150	350
6. Co-ordinator contact with groups:		
none	28%	49%
arranged first meeting	40%	45%
attended first meeting	28%	38%
7. Size of groups:		
average	5 - 6	6
range	2 - 12	2 - 12
8. Location of meetings	90% private homes	86% homes, 6% PPA premises
	Also clinics, health centres, schools	
9. Frequency of meetings	Weekly or fortnightly	Mostly fortnightly
10. Origin of groups:	Over 80% formed specifically for the course; remainder based on pre-existing groups such as playgroups, National Childbirth Trust (NCT), classes, Mother and Toddler Groups.	
11. Plans for post-course meetings:		
to celebrate or repeat course	20%	64%
to continue for another purpose - friendship, playgroup	20%	11%

Source: Community Education Evaluation Group, Papers 2 and 3, and Project Memo 14.

The nature of the target audience required expenditure to be kept to a fee level within the means of a significant section of the population; but at the same time it called for the production of relatively expensive full-colour, magazine-style materials which would be attractive and familiar. It was possible to resolve the potential conflict between these two requirements by arguing that economies of scale could be achieved, i.e. that the courses would have sufficiently wide appeal to enable the recovery of high costs through relatively low fees charged to large numbers of students.

Overall costings for the courses in 1977 were worked out as follows, assuming a total of 30,000 students on both courses over six course presentations:

	£
Fixed or once-off costs (Staffing and materials development)	151,000
Variable student-related costs (production, delivery, administration)	144,000
	295,000
less grant	25,000
	270,000

Divided among 30,000 students = £9 fee

After two presentations, 43 per cent of costs have been recovered. Unfortunately, rises in variable costs mean that the fee will be raised to £10 for October 1978.

The generous grant of £25,000 was provided by the Health Education Council to help with staff costs. The Pre-school Playgroups Association released the services of a Training and Development Officer for one day a week, free of charge, and certain other staff costs (e.g. editorial services) were met by the University. The University also currently carries for the Post-Experience Courses Unit both indirect overheads (phones, offices, etc.) and the cost of publicity.

Publicity costs for the first two presentations of the courses have been high, as is normal for the University when launching new courses. In addition to the cost of advertising in a variety of national newspapers and magazines, 1/3 million leaflets and 30,000 posters were prepared for local distribution. The return on these leaflets proved to be quite high - 3 per cent - for a relatively low cost - 35p. per student. On future presentations the comparative responses to different types of publicity will be examined more thoroughly, in order to formulate the most effective publicity strategy.

H. RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTS OF THE COURSES

The Institutional Research and Development Committee of the University is currently funding a 27-month evaluation programme for the courses due by the end of December 1979.

Interviews with a small sample of groups of students have been undertaken to inform the development of a Student Questionnaire, and also more detailed Feedback Forms which will relate to specific parts of the course materials.

The Student questionnaire, Co-ordinator questionnaire and Broadcast questionnaire have all been successfully developed and used. More routinised feedback techniques are now to be developed. The questionnaires (see Tables 4 and 5) reveal a high degree of satisfaction with the courses; and they have provided the Post-Experience Courses Unit with invaluable data about how students and co-ordinators tackle the courses.

The evaluation of sponsored places and informal uses has taken priority over detailed attitude or behaviour change studies, which are now seen as fit subjects for a separate research study.

In the longer term also the effects on local communities of encouraging course self-help groups will be of interest. For example, will course groups stay in existence after taking the course together, and for what purpose? Will pre-existing groups taking the courses alter as a result?

Finally, in addition to student-based research there is also the evaluation being planned with health professionals in particular as to how the course materials may influence their day-to-day work and be incorporated in it; and how in general the courses may be used as a resource in all kinds of disadvantaged groups.

Research findings will be distributed to the collaborating agencies, to the course teams (now reduced to a single 'maintenance' team) and to the teams planning courses for 1979 and onwards.

Examples of the impact of evaluation work on course developments are: confirmation of advertising plans, year-round mailings; changes to co-ordinator role; development of informal users register; abandonment of 'Hotline' phone service. Evaluation is seen as an invaluable part of the total Community Education programme.

For financial reasons the courses require a life of 3 - 4 years substantially in their existing form. Whether then the maintenance team will recommend that they be withdrawn, have a fast total remake or a slow 'rolling remake' of parts over the years, depends on the results of the evaluation - and also on the extent to which the courses have become outdated in terms of research findings in the field of child development.

Remakes of The First Years of Life and The Pre-school Child are now planned for 1982, following a 3-year materials research and development project funded by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation. The existing courses will be used as a springboard for developing materials with disadvantaged parents in four local Van Leer projects in the United Kingdom.

Evaluation of students' reactions to these courses has influenced the development of Childhood 5-10 for 1980: for example, an even greater stress on the process of parenting and its difficulties.

Table 4

HELPFULNESS OF COURSE COMPONENTS: OCTOBER 1977 RATINGS

Course Component	Very helpful %		Fairly helpful %		Not very helpful %		Not at all helpful	
	First Years	Pre-School	First Years	Pre-School	First Years	Pre-School	First Years	Pre-School
Booklets	94	89	44	9	0	1	0	0
Television	36	32	49	50	10	99	0	1
Radio	15	13	36	39	26	27	3	3
Records	14	13	45	50	20	21	2	1
Resource Pack	35	44	51	46	7	6	2	0
Assignments	48	28	21	22	7	6	1	3

Sources: Community Education Evaluation Group.
Audio-Visual Media Research Group Reports Nos. 98 and 99.

Table 5

AREAS COVERED BY STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Finding out about the course
Deciding to sign on
Sharing course materials
Aims in taking the course
Contacting group co-ordinator
First group meeting
Subsequent group meetings
Benefits and problems of groups
TV and radio viewing
Extent of course reading and work
Patterns of study
Use of enquiry service
Reading difficulties
Usefulness and interest of course components
Outstanding topics and activities
Completion of assignments
Self-reported attitude and behaviour change
Future plans

VIII

NEW STYLES IN TRAINING OF PROFESSIONALS AND PARENTS

by

Anne Corbett

A. INTRODUCTION

At no other period in the history of early childhood care and education has the training of personnel been a more important issue. In a context of expansion and changing values, new skills are demanded and new kinds of personnel involved. This report looks at the current situation and the changing context. It examines trends which appear to have a particular interest for the future, and it points to the gaps which remain to be filled.

Drawing on the somewhat sparse information provided by Member countries this section covers both initial and in-service training, and the training of professionals and para-professionals, including parents. Training has become an archetypal "second generation" problem. It is one of the key issues which need re-examining in the light of experience. For what has been apparent is that no country whose early childhood policies have been reviewed by CERI/OECD is satisfied with both the quantity and quality of its provision. Denmark, for example, generally regarded as having achieved a relatively high level in both respects, has found the need to review its policy. France, which has a remarkable quantitative achievement, is less happy about the qualitative aspect. Sweden is reported as having difficulty in achieving its targets for trained nursery school teachers. In the Netherlands the contrast is apparent, both quantitatively and qualitatively, between crèche provision for the under-fours and kindergarten provision for the 4-6 age group. The United Kingdom faces particular qualitative problems in its provision of full day care.

As this report will show, there has been no consensus among OECD Member states about the nature of training or qualifications for ECCE staff. Each country's policy has been clearly marked by its own history. For example, the extent to which provision has been seen as a matter for voluntary institutions, including the church, or alternatively for the state, as part of its basic social services; whether that provision is regarded as widely desirable, or rather as a kind of first-aid for unfortunate cases. This, in turn, reflects a view about the desirability of mothers of young children working. Countries also vary in the extent to which they regard ECCE as the responsibility of professionals, and in the extent to which parent participation is encouraged.

Each country has nevertheless been influenced by certain general trends. Thus, in the past, there has been a general view that very young children - up to the age of 3 or 4 needed "care", older pre-school children needed education. The first, with its connotations of care and oversight, required staff trained to deal with the physical, rather than the intellectual and affective, needs of the child. It is apparent that in many countries the greatest proportion of staff concerned with care in crèches and day nurseries have a nursing-oriented training while those in nursery schools have some sort of teacher training. The notion that the two types of staff need to be trained to deal with two different categories of children is reinforced by social judgements. In most countries the criterion for care of the under-3s is "need". Where funds and places are almost always limited, priority goes to the children of socially and economically disadvantaged families, to abused or neglected children and to the children of mothers in full-time work. In the programmes for the over-3s - though, again, places are usually limited - proportionately most places get taken up by children of middle class families.

It has also been regarded as axiomatic in the past that staff should be female, and students should be young. Men are either explicitly excluded by regulations, or discouraged by low salaries and the deeply entrenched view that the staff are not really mother substitutes. They are doing the job parents are not doing well enough, but they are not meant to be parents. Various trends are now combining to challenge these long-held assumptions. One factor is the expansion, or the planned expansion, of ECCE facilities, notable in all Member countries. Another is the changing view about the nature of childhood. There is now a much greater emphasis on getting the teacher accustomed to what has been called "the ecological approach", i.e. seeing the child as part of his family. A third factor is the wish of any parents to participate much more actively in the education of their young children, a matter which may coincide happily with the administrative problems of finding and paying enough staff, given that ECCE is highly labour intensive.

Such trends throw into relief questions about the style and content of professional training. Should the traditionally separate roles of the kindergarten teacher and nursery nurse be kept separate or is it time to rewrite history and combine them in a new role of day care worker? What should be the content of the professional training, both theoretical and practical? What should be the minimum entry requirements? Could relevant employment experience replace some of the formal educational qualifications as a condition of acceptance? If the roles cannot be combined what should the relationships between them be? Should there be common points of status, remuneration and conditions of service? What is the contribution of in-service training?

The question also arises about the "training" of parents, and whether the most effective way of involving parents in the planning and operation of community-based ECCE programmes is not through earlier involvement in preparation or education for parenthood courses? Has the cheapness of such methods got anything to commend it more generally?

The following section sketches the current situation on the basis of information which Member countries have submitted to OECD.

B. THE CURRENT SITUATION: HESITANT STEPS TOWARDS A COMMON STRUCTURE?

We suggested earlier that each country's approach to the training of ECCE personnel is profoundly influenced by national history and traditions. In the following account differences are easily detectable in the degree to which governments retain control of professional training and the setting of standards. But it will also be noticed that there are some trends which override administrative structures and that for the purposes of this section it is more interesting to group those Member countries for which we have information by 1) their attitude to a unified profession, 2) their modification of the curriculum to take account of a "global" or "ecological" approach to early childhood, 3) the development of in-service training for professionals, 4) the development of training for para-non-professionals, including parents.

Austria, for example, has a traditional, divided system of training for those concerned with the under-5s. This is in the context of a widely-held view that "there should be as little provision as possible for under-3s, as much as possible for over-3s". The notion of an "early childhood education" worker does not appear to have made any headway. Kindergarten teachers are lower status primary school teachers. They may start on a kindergarten training course at the age of 14 (i.e. without completing a full secondary course). The training course, leading to a federal diploma, lasts four years. This compares with the requirement for primary school teachers to have completed the full secondary course (or 13 years of general education) followed by a higher education course of two years.

Day care staff, recruited after a social work training, are however required to complete a full secondary course, although entry is also open to students completing the top level of vocational schooling or who do a test based on maturity and experience. The length of the course is two years, the qualification a degree. The curriculum of the future kindergarten teacher does, under federal regulations, include a significant element of educational theory. But the social worker courses, designed to equip students for a wide range of public and private welfare work, gives educational theory and practice only a limited place: psychology occupies eight hours of a two-year course, education five hours. But students may take options on educational issues. Courses do also provide for the observation of child, family and environment.

In-service training for kindergarten teachers is the responsibility of the employing local or church authorities. The programmes of the church employers (Interessengemeinschaft der Erhalter Kirchlicher Kindertagesheimstätten) include seminars on parental duties and the principles of client-centred discussion. The Vienna city council courses, which are regularly updated, emphasise psychology. There is a general trend to stress the importance of home-school contacts, with the suggestion that such contact can enrich family child-raising practices.

In-service training for social workers is provided at provincial and local level. The conventions of the Austrian Committee for Social Work (Oesterreichisches Komitee für Sozialarbeit) are also an important source of professional updating.

Such parental education as exists is essentially to tell them about what the teachers are doing and the aims of the school. It is not geared at their participation in the classroom.

In England and Wales also there is a divided structure of training. But there the kindergarten teacher is in a privileged position compared with overseas counterparts. The training is integrated into the structure of general teacher training. Their course lasts 3 to 4 years,at the end of which they get a degree. Or they may qualify with a one-year post-graduate course, though not in nursery education per se.

The qualified staff of day care institutions are of low status compared with their Austrian counterparts, and have a nursery nurse qualification. This is obtained after a two-year course at a further education college and open to applicants with few formal academic qualifications. There has been widespread concern that the training, though adequate for students wishing to work in hospitals and other large institutions, is not a satisfactory basis for taking charge of a day care nursery. The government is now recommending that senior staff should also have a social work qualification.

In-service training has been on a meagre scale but is being developed rapidly for nursery nurses. In England a particularly interesting development, dealt with in more detail in section E,is the training associated with the voluntary playgroups movement which is run by parents, and which provides for more children (though for shorter hours) than any other form of pre-school care and education.

Recent concern about the quality of child minding (home and family day care) has led to pressure that child minders should be given some training. A number of voluntary part-time schemes now exist to improve the quality of care given by minders who are required by law to register but whose test of suitability is limited to the standards of safety, health and space.

English teacher training traditionally includes periods of practical experience alternating with academic studies and courses of educational theory. Students are taught about the importance of close links between home and school (the "ecological approach"). But it is apparent that training for kindergarten or nursery teaching is increasingly incorporated into general primary teaching.

Nursery nurse training, though lower level, is distinctive for its global approach; giving equal importance to education and health care. It is the only initial training in England which bridges the professional boundaries. But it is criticised for its assumptions that the best place for the under-5s is at home with mother.

There has been some pressure for the development of a training structure which would unite the nursery teacher with the nursery nurses, and for nursery provision which would dispose of the administrative barrier created by making day care the responsibility of the education ministry. But though the case is argued with passion (e.g. by the Trades Union Congress, 1978) developments have foundered on the fact that there are such vast differences in status and in the content of training of nursery teachers and nursery nurses. It is possible that the presence of social workers in senior positions in day nurseries will prove to be a bridge between the two kinds of provision rather than a further barrier. But it is already clear that it goes against trends in a number of other countries (e.g. the United States) which are trying to develop common professional elements at least at senior levels.

Switzerland has a particularly diffuse structure of training. Training courses for day care and kindergarten staff are therefore organised as they see fit by local communities, cantons and by private organisations. The usual entry age is 17. Courses last between 2 and 3 years. Midwives and nurses receive their training through the Red Cross.

The curriculum of day care staff and kindergarten teachers is essentially the responsibility of the training institution, i.e. the professors. Many are, however, affiliated to associations which offer them guidelines (the "Schweitzer Krippenverein" and the "Schweitzer Kindergartenverein"). The Red Cross is currently revising the curriculum for nurse and midwife courses, giving greater emphasis to the psychology, psychiatry and teaching of children.

In-service training has been the vehicle for developing two new professions: One is the conseillère maternelle (motherhood adviser: English style health visitor) open to qualified nurses, who take a six-month course with educational elements derived from Pro Juventute, an important voluntary organisation, and health elements derived from the nurses' professional body. The other newly developed professional is the director of parents groups, who may follow a 400-hour course.

There is a definite trend towards introducing a more global knowledge of childhood into all the professions concerned with early childhood although not a specifically "ecological" view of childhood. There is also a great debate about the structure of the early childhood professions. Pro Juventute is researching the scope of training course and the overlap between the different professional groups, with the idea that there should be some rationalisation. It is floating the idea of a new professional to be called the "early childhood educator".

The United States of America has also had an extremely fragmented structure of training for those working with young children. Recruitment and training are essentially in the hands of the professional bodies, which has led to problems in trying to adapt to new needs. Here,as in Switzerland,there are pressures to reform and unify. But in this case the initiative comes from the federal authority, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare,and its chosen mechanism is an in-service training programme. The Child Development Associate Program is dealt with in more detail in the following section.

Among the Member countries for which we have information, Denmark has gone furthest on the route to creating a common system of professional training for those in ECCE. But even so developments rest at the stage of discussion.

At present the structure of training for pre-school personnel in Denmark is as divided as elsewhere. The basic training of pre-school teachers consists of a three-year course which includes some teaching practice. The basic training of day nursery staff, which is common to those also expecting to work with the handicapped, is also a three-year schooling, and also includes training periods in the field for three or four months a year. It takes place in colleges run by the Ministry of Social Welfare. Such a structure leaves the way open for implementing a common structure since the educational level at entry, the length of courses and the status on qualifying are the same for trained staff of all categories working with children up to the age of 6. Curriculum for kindergarten teachers has been evolved so that theories have to be tested against practice. The level has proved too hard for some students, and the curriculum and the form of the final examination are currently under review. The curriculum for day care staff underlines a comprehensive view of child development and the subjects correspond to those taught in the pre-school teacher training colleges.

A number of recent initiatives have been taken in in-service training. Courses have been evolved which fit in with teachers' working hours. There has been some development of local study groups. In-service training for day care staff at present consists of a one-year full-time course. Particularly interesting are the courses developed for day care mothers which scarcely exist elsewhere, except on a small scale in England. In Denmark, day care mothers are encouraged to join a 70-hour course run by the adult education service, and which deals with child development and education as well as children's health and nutrition, and with the channels for communication and co-operation between parents, day care mothers and local authorities.

A development of great significance for early childhood is the Danish government's commitment to the view that the education system should be reviewed in terms of "man's four lives: working life, family life, leisure and life in the community". Explicitly recognising that both parents in a family are likely to work, it changes the climate in which ECCE is provided which in turn influences the assumptions about training. The government has commissioned a report from its Central Council for Education which was published in 1978 and from its Children's Commission, which is charged with the job of analysing conditions for the pre-school child.

C. TRENDS: NEW STYLE OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING

It will be clear from the previous section that a number of Member countries are now seriously interested in in-service training as a method of adapting to new needs. It is also clear that it is much easier, if not more relevant, to produce a common course for those who already have some experience in working with young children. This section considers two examples: the American Child Development Associate Program, to which reference has already been made, and the Dutch GEON project.

1. The Child Development Associate Program (CDA)

The original features of this programme are that the training programme applies to all personnel from the director to the service staff; and also that each participant is integrated into a research group. The CDA programme is thus an example of a procedure for the transmission of normative information which endeavours to cover the whole network of individuals and groups concerned in any educational activity in any given institution.

The programme is concerned with training, assessing and providing qualifications for child care staff. It was initiated by the ex-Office of Child Development, Office of Human Development (now the Administration for Children, Youth and Families, Office of Human Development Services) in the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare. It grew out of the experience of Head Start and other child development programmes, and its main aim is to increase the skills and knowledge of classroom staff, rewarding them with a new title: child development associate.

A child development associate is able to meet the specific needs of a group of pre-school children in a child development setting by nurturing the children's physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth; by establishing and maintaining a proper child care environment; and by promoting good relations between parents and the child development centre. The CDA credential is awarded after the aspirant has satisfactorily demonstrated competence in his or her performance with children.

The aim of CDA training is to help trainees incorporate the CDA competencies into their everyday behaviour and thus become competent child-care givers. The training process of professional self-development in which both trainee and trainer work together is characterised by the following features:

- it is based upon the acquisition of a set of specified competencies for child care staff working in centre-based pre-school programmes;
- it is organised so that academic and field work are an integrated set of experiences. A minimum of 50 per cent of the trainee's total training time is spent in supervised field work;
- it is individualised according to each trainee's strengths and needs with respect to the CDA competencies;
- it is flexibly scheduled so that the length of the training programme depends upon the trainee's acquisition of the CDA competencies.

The programme dates from 1973 when the Office of Child Development funded 13 pilot programmes to train candidates in the CDA competencies and to develop replicable methods of training. These programmes, based in both rural and urban communities, enrolled trainees from a variety of ethnic, cultural and language groups. The training took place in a wide range of institutions including universities, junior and community colleges, Head Start programmes, private training organisations, and consortia of early childhood organisations, colleges and government agencies. Many of these pilot training programmes successfully developed training materials. These are still in use although the pilot projects themselves are no longer being funded.

There are more than 350 colleges and universities providing CDA competency-based training for approximately 4,000 Head Start classroom staff annually through Head Start Supplementary Training (HSST) programmes funded by the Office of Child Development. In addition, pilot programmes to train bilingual-bicultural CDAs and to develop training models were funded in 1975. Other institutions not funded by the Office of Child Development are using the CDA competencies as a basis for developing and implementing competency-based training programmes for child-care givers.

The CDA competencies are an operational definition of the behaviour staff are expected to demonstrate in order to foster children's growth and learning. They are based on widely-accepted assumptions about children's developmental needs. The competencies are classified into six general competency areas:

i) Establishment and maintenance of a safe and healthy learning environment.
ii) Advancement of physical and intellectual competence.
iii) Support of a positive self-image and individual strength.
iv) Promotion of harmonious interrelation between children and adults in a group environment.
v) Development of good co-ordination between home and centre with regard to child-rearing practices and expectations; and
vi) Ability to carry out supplementary responsibilities related to the children's programmes.

Assessment is carried out by the Child Development Associate Consortium which was established in June 1972 and which awards credentials. The consortium is a private, non-profit corporation, composed of 39 national organisations which have a direct interest in early childhood education and child development. Though funded by the Office of Child Development, the consortium is not a federal agency. Its policy decisions are established by the consortium membership, through its board of directors and staff. The consortium is now actively seeking additional sources of funds.

Its assessment and credentialling procedures have been in operation since 1975. An assessment features four elements:

i) A team assessment - the local assessment team (LAT), which consists of the candidate, the trainer, a parent-community representative, and a consortium representative. Each of the four members of the LAT views the candidate from a different perspective.

ii) A performance-based assessment - each LAT member collects information on the candidate's performance by observing the candidate working with children, staff and parents. To collect this information, the team employs a variety of instruments, including a survey of the parents of the children in the candidate's group.

iii) A judgement-referenced assessment - the co-ordinated judgement of the LAT. As a "compass" for the LAT members' observations and judgements the consortium provides each with a copy of its competency standards, which lists the kind of qualities and abilities that a competent child care worker should possess.

iv) A verified assessment - to ensure the integrity and quality of assessments. The consortium insists that every LAT adhere strictly to consortium regulations. It is the responsibility of the consortium representative to verify that the LAT observes the regulations. Without this verification the consortium will not recognise any recommendations of a LAT.

2. The Dutch GEON Project

The Dutch GEON project is much more specifically oriented to what its clients are already doing. It started in 1974 and is scheduled to last until 1980. It has two aims: the testing and elaborating of teacher-oriented methods to help in the education of children between the ages of 4 and 8, and particularly those in the 4-6 range; and the establishment of a method of disseminating this knowledge to schools and advisory services.

It arose out of a common interest on the part of the government, the universities and other educational organisations in improving educational facilities for disadvantaged children, and in developing compensatory programmes on the lines of the American Head Start. In addition, the national educational research organisation hoped to find a model for the application of research results to practice; the school advisory services wanted a model for the guidance of pre-school education, and the Ministry wanted a more structural answer to the increasing numbers of referrals to special schools and some suggestions of how to improve the system of educational reform and guidance.

Tentative conclusions of the project team, which are relevant for this report, are that teachers concerned were most favourable to what the researchers call an "innovation experiment" and that the external presence of the team had contributed to success on the part of the project children. In terms of the secondary aim of the project, devising a model for the dissemination of information, the team also claim some success. As the team themselves describe their consultancy approach on schools, teaching practice and guidance, they say(1):

"A fundamental aspect of the project's approach to schools is enhancement of the school's own possibilities to cope with its own responsibilities and problems. Not all schools need this enhancement, at least not in its fullest form. This is why flexibility in offering supportive means is so important.

This starting point of the project - a matter of approach more than of exactly definable means - can be further defined as follows: to give the teacher (school team) the kind of aid and support which makes it easier (more pleasant) to employ available teaching methods and curriculum features that can aid children who face the threat of lagging behind.

With this definition in mind it can be stated that the project is superfluous if:

- the above-mentioned teaching methods and curriculum features are not available;
- obstacles to the use of what is available are not rooted in organisation or aptitude;
- there are no children who face the threat of lagging behind.

In many instances one of these conditions is fulfilled, and in such cases the GEON project efforts simply do not apply. If they do apply, they involve:

- defining, in terms of characteristics, analysis and action plan, the problems and children to be focused on (cf. Verbalisation of Problem Behaviour);
- creating a structure in the class, within which the extra attention can be given (cf. Mini-course on Independent Learning);
- substantiating that attention (cf. Predicting and Reacting Task Series);
- relating this substantiation, functionally and in terms of organisation, to the social situation which necessitates it (cf. Working-file Neighbourhood-Family-School).

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1) "The Dutch GEON Project: Memorandum on Aspects of Dissemination", OECD/CERI, 1978 (mimeographed).

When in a situation impeded by circumstances the search is rather unproductive, a school may lapse into pursuits which are of little use to either teacher or children. Such a school can be helped through dead waters by a sustained effort, jointly with guidance agencies, to find solutions on the basis of programmes. Experience has shown that, for many schools, such a joint search leads to a journey of discovery which does not end from one day to the other.

The inventory phase of the project has disclosed that many schools hardly recognise the aspect of joint discovery in the guidance customarily available to them. 'They mean well, but the real problems of the school are never broached', was a characteristic conclusion of a kindergarten matron. Such conclusions are most likely to come from schools most in need of some extra help. It is evident that each other's possibilities are not sufficiently recognised. Enhancement of mutual recognisability can be an important function of the dissemination of project components."

Out of such encounters the team have developed a list of "products" which are useful for their various clients: government, advisory services, the neighbourhood and the school themselves. They have built up data files and courses on their methodology, on areas of information for the different clients (e.g. the verbalisation of problem behaviour for use with schools, neighbourhoods and parents) on school selection procedures for the advisory services, on dealing with children at risk. They have also developed courses on individual learning. They claim that contacts with teachers have been favourable, that project children have improved and ways have been established of giving GEON project results a tangible form.

D. TRENDS: USING THE MEDIA

The German Distance Teaching Scheme: DIFF

The problem in the Federal Republic of Germany was somewhat different: how to train enough staff initially, given the sudden enormous increase in demand for their services. The demand for academic expertise on early childhood and on socialisation processes hit the German universities hard and suddenly in the late 1960s. Traditional courses for teachers were based on subject expertise, and university psychologists and sociologists, up till then primarily researchers, found themselves becoming instructors.

This pressure also created the momentum for the establishment of the Deutsches Institut für Fernstudien (DIFF) or the German Institute for Distance Studies. Based at Tübingen, it has developed units of study, in collaboration with scientists, which respond to modern demands. Thus a language unit includes elements on psycholinguistics, a series of pedagogical psychology summarises the essentials of class-specific socialisation research; a series of counselling in education includes elements of therapy for children and parents.

Consisting essentially of radio broadcasts, repeated at different times to ensure the maximum audience, there is also accompanying written material. In towns there are also study centres. Students are tested by written examination marked centrally. Successful candidates are awarded a certificate which is recognised by the universities.

The DIFF model has been successful in its aim of transmitting the required knowledge; it would be equally suitable for teachers and others working in the field as well as for university students who want introductory courses to the subject. But the DIFF model has to be seen in the context of a severe problem of ECCE in Germany: the proliferation of courses at universities and different professional schools, which, though oriented towards the same profession, have few elements in common.

E. A PROTEST: TRAINING BY PARENTS FOR PARENTS - THE ENGLISH PPA

The parent trained to work with pre-school children is not usually the parent trained to work with pre-school teachers, but the parent working in an alternative kind of provision: the parent-run playgroup, common in Canada and the United Kingdom.

Such groups tend to be found in those middle-class environments where the capability of mothers and volunteers to organise and obtain funds and help is greater. But a more interesting characteristic for this report is that some of them have developed a form of training which has proved its relevance for those with no previous experience, and which is independent of specialised training institutions. This section looks at the training schemes of the English Pre-school Playgroups Association (PPA).

PPA exists as much for the benefit of parents as their children. A marked feature of the organisation is therefore its emphasis on not frightening away parents who think they are not "qualified", an emphasis which is apparent in the style of training. In the early days of the PPA, during the late 1960s, there was a view that formal training was not particularly necessary for running a group. "We were doing training without knowing it" (as one training organiser puts it). There was then a gradual evolution to more structured courses to meet the needs of volunteer parents helping to run groups. These varied, since the initiative came from the group (and there are 26,000 groups in all) of the region, and not from any central body. But a common pattern has been for two-hour sessions once a week over a period ranging from 4 to 10 weeks. There was at the same time pressure for some national guidelines for a course which delved more deeply. The result in 1975 was the establishment of guidelines for a playgroup foundation course to which the PPA as a whole put its name. It is entirely consistent with the PPA's aims that this is in no way seen as a national qualification at playgroup leader level, which would engender, as the movement sees it, a "spurious professionalism". Its purpose is to improve:

- the adults' sensitivity to the needs of the children, emotional, social, intellectual, aesthetic and physical;
- the standard of playgroup presentation and management;
- the quality and meaning of parent participation, leading to an understanding of adult relationships within the family and the community.

Courses are open to all. Some may already be involved as supervisors, helpers, or committee members in an existing group; others may wish to start a playgroup; some may join because of their interest in child development. They are held wherever 20 or so students can be accommodated and facilities provided for the handling of play materials: teachers' centres or adult education centres but also church halls. Courses are arranged in modules to suit the needs of the group: one day a week over three 10-week terms, or one half-day and one evening a week over two years, or six modules of ten weeks over two years - in all about 120 hours. Those completing the course are given a certificate of attendance. But again it is consistent with the aims of the movement that the awards are in no way classified. Tutors are overwhelmingly drawn from those "who have grown up in the movement". They may be aided by outside experts: nursery school teachers, health visitors, etc.

The contents of the courses are structured around the family and the child, the child and the playgroup, and the playgroup and the community. They take in child development, the practical and administrative side of running a playgroup, and a great deal about adult relationships, underlining the theme that playgroups should not diminish the parents' role.

F. TRAINING IS CONTINUOUS: THE "GESTIONE SOCIALE"

Finally, we come to the Italian notion of "gestione sociale". Born of a very different climate from the English playgroups, they are equally shaped by the view that pre-school facilities should offer adults as well as children opportunities for social development. Their originality lies in their management. The community runs the group. But teachers still teach.

The management body, which includes parents, representatives of the local authority and local figures such as trade union representatives, are responsible for financing, the curriculum, teacher training, etc. Its importance for this report is that the change of management style has led to a change of teacher style and in particular their concern with improving what they can do. Meetings of teachers (and often non-teaching staff) are being held on a regular basis, often weekly, to deal with curriculum development as well as everyday problems. Outside experts may come in to help. It may not be training in the conventional sense. But it can be a very effective educational instrument. Autonomy from hierarchical constrictions is reflected in the higher quality of education.

G. CONCLUSIONS

We started this report on training with the questions left to us:

- Should the traditionally separate roles of the kindergarten teacher and nursery nurse be kept separate, or should they be combined in a new role of day care worker?
- What should be the content of professional training?
- What should be the minimum entry requirements?
- How can experience be valued?
- If kindergarten and day nursery staff roles cannot be combined, what should the relationship between them be?
- What is the contribution of in-service training?
- What can be learnt from playgroups, particularly as cheaper alternatives?

In the light of evidence produced for this study it is not possible to give definitive answers. But we can point to some trends and suggest that some of these questions should be rephrased. For it is evident that the reform of professional training is not a relatively simple matter of changing structures. It is inextricably bound up with the values and roles a society accords the family.

To summarise our findings first: it is evident that there has been an expansion in the numbers of students taken into training for work with young children. Many reports point to a rapid increase since the beginning of the 1970s. In Austria the numbers of social workers in training has increased sixfold, and the numbers of student kindergarten teachers has trebled. In Germany the numbers of students taking education studies has increased tenfold, the number of student kindergarten teachers has doubled.

It is also apparent that the responsibility for training is fragmented. The division of responsibility between ministries of social welfare taking responsibility for day care and ministries of education taking responsibility for kindergarten training is almost universal (the United States is an exception). In a number of countries voluntary associations are active (e.g. Switzerland). In others, professional associations are particularly strong and effectively control training and initial recruitment (e.g. the United States). Only Denmark is in a position to surmount this structural barrier without a lot of difficulty.

What are called "compensatory procedures" have been introduced as a partial palliative. In most cases these take the form of re-training, using, in a number of cases, new techniques. We quote in this report the Child Development Associate Program in the United States, which does, indeed, have a compensatory character aiming to provide a common basis for its early childhood workers. We quote, too, the rather different Dutch GEON project, which tries to beam its in-service training on very precisely defined targets. The German DIFF programme is different again: a model for circumventing the expense of providing initial training in specialised institutions and using the media instead.

Not all Member states emphasise the value of practical experience in training. Denmark and the United Kingdom appear exceptional. It is interesting to note that in some cases efforts are now being made to bridge the practitioner/theorist gap. Denmark and Austria have official arrangements for fostering the exchange of information through joint researcher-practitioner study groups. In the United Kingdom this can happen but tends to depend on the initiative of the researcher (e.g. the Bruner group at Oxford).

There do not seem to be many efforts to recruit a new kind of personnel. Attention has already been drawn to the lack of men, to the lack of older women, who are happy, in theory, to work with young children once their own children are off their hands, but inhibited in practice by lack of qualifications and by the fact that courses are dominated by young students. In this connection the courses for child-minders in Denmark and the United Kingdom are of interest, as are the courses of the English Pre-school Playgroups Association (which claim also to attract a number of fathers).

In terms of the content of the training curriculum we may note that most Member countries have been concerned to update programmes in line with recent or relatively recent thinking about child development, but there are clearly major differences between Member countries about the extent to which they think it is important that the child should be seen "ecologically" in the context of home and community, and in the importance accorded to the enriching part parents can play in the early education and care of their children.

In this context it is worth noting Gérome's view(1): "Inasmuch as information on early childhood is tending to become a specific field for research in all the disciplines concerned and has prompted the development of specific techniques of care and education, there is a growing differentiation in the educational functions of an increasing number of specialist groups. These groups are in the process of dividing up the tasks which previously fell to the family as a whole and particularly the mother. The increasingly technical nature, whether real or simulated, of the professions concerned with early childhood care is both cause and justification of an upgrading of the practitioners involved and of the conceptual approach to early childhood on which professional practice is based. Care should be taken to ensure that these trends do not prevent members of the family group from spontaneously exercising their educational functions, since this might lead to the establishment of a hierarchy of the legitimacy of educational procedures graded according to the technical nature of the operations involved and the specialised character of the scientific references concerned. In this way early childhood specialists would develop their own professional specifications to which parents would gradually have to conform".

As evidence that this danger is appreciated, we note at the same time two alternative approaches: that of the Pre-school Playgroups Association, which defends passionately the right, if not the duty, of parents to participate in the early education and care of their children and now reinforce this explicitly by their training courses; and secondly that of the Italian "gestione sociale", which works on the basis that teachers need constantly to adapt and to be ready to work in a team with parents, and that training effectively goes on all the time, in the group.

What then of the future? We may reiterate the concern of Tizard when talking about different forms of day care: it is the quality which counts, rather than the place in which it is offered. This applies nowhere more strongly than to the content of the training curriculum.

As for structure, the Danish experience is clearly worth monitoring. So are any attempts to break down barriers of status and training for comparable jobs on different sides of the education/welfare fence. (We may note that the British experience of bringing in a new group of professionals to take the most senior jobs in day care, rather than in encouraging a career structure for nursery nurses or a bridge across to nursery teachers, seems extraordinarily retrogressive). We suggest that more OECD/CERI work should be directed

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1) Noëlle Gérome, "Production and Diffusion of Knowledge about Children", OECD/CERI, 1978 (mimeographed).

to job comparability in ECCE day care and education. This would in turn assist development work on training programmes.

We applaud the efforts to simplify the professional structure of early childhood work and to stress the common elements. But it is clear that very few countries are in a position to create a single profession. We hope that OECD/CERI efforts will be directed as a priority, therefore, to the case for a modular curriculum in initial training which would have elements common to those working in both the social and the educational services. Like Mantovani, in a 1977 document prepared for CERI, we hope development work would be encouraged which also closely links general and practical training. As she puts it:

"The crèche teacher has to acquire a good basic knowledge of developmental psychology and of educational techniques. Such competencies can only be acquired by closely linking general and practical training. A great part of the work should be based on the detailed observation of the child in the crèche and possibly even at home; on the observation of the teachers' behaviours and of their effects on the children. We feel this to be a prerequisite for the setting up of a curriculum for the children which should be based as far as possible on the individual rhythms of the child."

"The training should give the teacher a working experience in many social and educational services, directly or indirectly connected with the child: crèche and pre-school teaching experiences, home assistance to young mothers, help to medical specialists, work with handicapped children. A comprehensive experience as such, combined with the specialisation in one field has many advantages."

"Teachers must acquire the ability to work with adults and to know the social environment outside the crèche well. We have made it clear how important it is for a teacher to establish good relationships with parents and co-workers and to be able to work in a team. The more so if real integration between home and crèche is to be fostered. Experience to work with adults is also necessary for the teacher who is often young and unmarried, in order to cope with social issues besides the internal problems of the crèche. This contributes to give him/her a good knowledge of the background of the child and the family: this is important if the teacher works in an open crèche where he is often called to take an initiating and stimulating role towards the parents who are new to participation experience. A good knowledge of the social environment will help the teacher to make up a working programme related to the experience of the child and therefore more likely to motivate him to learn... The teacher's work with the community could also be important for training parents or volunteer help in those cases in which the crèche is not a service for everybody, but mainly a centre, a point of reference for the entire community. A teacher with good practical training can possibly be the best trainer for mothers, grandmothers, child-minders."

It is also clear that in-service training will become more rather than less important. Developments such as the American CDA and the Dutch GEON project should be monitored. Similarly the experience of the German DIFF programme. We hope OECD/CERI will also search out training developments aimed at those whose main contribution is their experience (Danish and English child-minders, English Pre-school Playgroups Association members). We hope it will also pay attention to such developments as the Italian "gestione sociale" which appears to have changed traditional professional preconceptions.

To end with - a further recommendation of Mantovani's: "Staff should co-operate in research and be 'research-minded' in carrying on their work." This is vitally important at a time like the present while the policy of many Member states is relatively fluid and international examples of great potential interest.

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Reform in the organisation of official services for children and families is one of the current issues in the debate on social policies. This volume contains a series of essays on the limits and possibilities of reform in the sector of day care and pre-school education.

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